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Roots and Routes: The Cultural Politics and Translocality of Hip Hop and Heavy Metal

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Fabio Coura de Faria

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O presente trabalho em nível de Doutorado foi avaliado e aprovado, em 23 de Junho de 2022, pela banca examinadora composta pelos seguintes membros:

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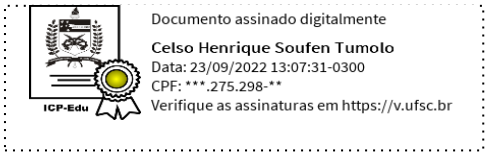

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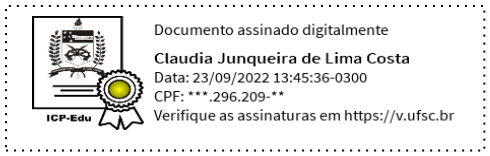

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To those who have wandered through the
transformative doorways of music.

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Music and its rituals can be used to create a model whereby identity can be understood neither as a fixed essence nor as a vague and utterly contingent construction to be reinvented by the will and whim of aesthetes, symbolists, and language gamers.

(GILROY, 1993)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the translocality and cultural politics present in the musical movements of hip hop and heavy metal from the historicization of different colonial, diasporic, and modern trajectories in the Americas, focusing on the case of Latin America and Brazil. It aims to deepen current debates on the hybrid interactions that are manifested in both musical genres in different ways, according to the narrativization of specific lyrical contents, reinforcing the musical treatment of identity, locality and border crossing. Within this context, the investigation finds the cultural identifications, in the scope of specific artists such as Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa, and Rage Against the Machine, with Black, Indigenous, and Chicano/a decolonial voices through the rescuing of ethnic, cultural, political, epistemological, and cosmological elements, often exposing the ongoing operations of Coloniality while reaffirming the resistant presence of the Indigenous and Black subjects. The thesis also brings to the fore the denouncing of old and new forms of colonization, questioning Euro-ethnocentric paradigms of progress and the colonial borders of the modern nation-state. Analogously to the diasporic and border thinking of Paul Gilroy and Gloria Anzaldúa, the hip hop and heavy metal musical movements become illustrative of the condition and act of inhabiting and crossing geopolitical borders and margins, reinforcing multiple identities through essentially hybrid and translocal musical treatments.

Keywords: music; heavy metal; hip hop; translocal; decolonial.

RESUMO

Esta tese investiga a translocalidade e as políticas culturais presentes nos movimentos musicais do hip hop e do heavy metal a partir da historização de diferentes trajetórias coloniais, diaspóricas, e modernas nas Américas, com enfoque no caso da América Latina e do Brasil. Busca-se o entendimento aprofundado das interações híbridas que se manifestam em ambos os gêneros musicais de formas distintas, conforme a narrativização de conteúdos líricos específicos, reforçando o tratamento musical de identidade, localidade e travessia de fronteira. Dentro deste contexto, a investigação constata as identificações culturais, no escopo de artistas como Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa, e Rage Against the Machine, com vozes decoloniais Negras, Indígenas, e Chicanas a partir de resgates étnicos, culturais, políticos, epistemológicos, e cosmológicos, muitas vezes expondo as operações em curso da colonialidade ao mesmo tempo em que se reafirma a presença resistente do sujeito Indígena e Negro. Constatam-se também diversas formas de denúncia das antigas e novas formas de colonização, bem como questionamentos dos paradigmas euro-etnocêntricos de progresso e as fronteiras coloniais do Estado-nação moderno. Analogamente ao pensamento diaspórico e de fronteira de Paul Gilroy e Gloria Anzaldúa, tais movimentos musicais tornam-se ilustrativos da condição e do ato de habitar e atravessar fronteiras e margens geopolíticas, salientando identidades múltiplas por meio de tratamentos musicais essencialmente híbridos e translocais.

Palavras-chave: música; heavy metal; hip hop; translocal; decolonial.

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1. CHAPTER I – *INTRO*: THE SOCIOCULTURAL DYNAMICS OF MUSICAL APPROPRIATION

1.1 The Plight of Westernized Musicology

The broad context of this investigation pertains to musical appropriations and Cultural Studies. The academic engagement with music and culture integrating the investigation, namely in terms of (inter)disciplinary and critical perspectives on musical translocality, is not without precedent. In 1964, Alan Merriam, with *The Anthropology of Music*, introduced an ethnomusical model for the investigation of music beyond mediatic apparatuses. From Joseph Kerman's *Musicology* (1985) and Philip V. Bohlman's *The Study of Folk Music in the Modern World* (1988) an increasing account of a *musicultural* sociology began to take shape and was further explored in Ian Biddle's investigations of music performativity and its relationships with issues of gender, politics, identity and location (2007, 2011).

With the unveiling and examination of music's historical trajectories, aesthetics and discursive practices across different genres and places, the quintessential view of such art form and medium as nonrepresentational has been starkly questioned. The usage, above, of the word *music* in the singular refers simply to an art form, in contrast to the notion of a self-referential and autonomous music, namely claimed in "Western" "art music".[1] The latter is primarily associated with European musics that "have drawn upon, or repudiated, popular, non-Western, and ethnic musics" (BORN & HESMONDHALGH, 2000, p. 2), Western classical traditions and their derivatives, such as "the modernisms of Bartók and Stravinsky [and the] serialisms of Boulez, Stockhausen, and Babbitt" (p. 15). As discussed further, music's modernism in the "West"—or the geographical area whose cultural hegemony has had influence on politics and culture across the globe—is marked by the drawing upon, assimilation or the repudiation of "the rest", which leads us to question exceptionalist claims of autonomy of Western musical tradition and its cultural 'shrine'. From this context, Stuart Hall elucidates that

[1] Quotation marks are used in "Western" to signal the problem in homogenizing the complex relations between nations, politics, cultures, and music forms, as the term refers here to specific musical traditions derived from Europe. Likewise, the term "art music" appears in quotes to signal its volatility, mainly in excluding musics otherwise deemed popular (i.e. jazz and rock music) and the oftentimes exceptionalist, hegemonic discourses surrounding European art music.

> The West and the Rest became two sides of a single coin. What each now is, and what the terms we use to describe them mean, depend on the relations which were established between them long ago. The so-called uniqueness of the West was, in part, produced by Europe's contact and self-comparison with other, non-western, societies (the Rest), very different in their histories, ecologies, patterns of development, and cultures from the European model. The difference of these other societies and cultures from the West was the standard against which the West's achievement was measured. It is within the context of these relationships that the idea of 'the West' took on shape and meaning. (HALL, 1992, p. 187).

Nonetheless, musicology has oftentimes overlooked the means by which the relatively new perspective of music as a representational and potentially countercultural art form has enabled it to be simultaneously liberated and liberating, that is, to be set free from its own social elitism and to manifest its (re)constructions of difference and locality in openly cultural and political terms.

The late 20th century saw increased attention to the relations between cultural production, power, class and ethnicity, as explored in postcolonial perspectives. In *Orientalism* (1978), drawing mainly on the poststructuralism of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, Edward Said set to scrutinize colonial discourse in its operation to construct and reproduce Oriental subjugation. Said's work was pivotal for the development of postcolonial studies, comprising the analyses of literary works, theories, institutions and cultural productions in colonizing and colonized countries and how the former treats, (re)defines, and silences the latter through complex knowledge systems. As the 1990s witnessed the rise of the discourse of globalization, postcolonialism also advanced as an inter-disciplinary field whose heritage in contemporaneity has been subsumed, according to Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, in key contributions for the development of the history and theory of "race", culture, and power, as well as the understanding of the various borrowings employed in diverse cultural processes and products, including music. Within the context of globalization, the internationalization of music, both as a medium and an industry, brought into fold issues of cultural appropriation and West-East alterity. Thus, the articulation of identity and sociocultural difference in music inflamed its deconstruction as an autonomous, nonrepresentational art form, and became "a common problematic across musicology, ethnomusicology, and popular music studies" (BORN & HESMONDHALGH, 2000, p. 2).

1.2 Music and its Travels

Rethinking Western music tradition and its 'Others' (their fabrication as objects of power and cultural criticism) requires an increased account of the circulations and borrowings through which "Musicians from the West appropriate non-Western music, sometimes collaboratively [and] Non-Western musicians and musicians from subaltern groups within the West create new syncretic forms drawing on both Western and non-Western music" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 13). This is especially important when considering locally-based musical forms in the Global North and in the Global South that have been used to (re)construct alterity and difference, to mark place and identity (of a musical, ontological, social or cultural kind) through aesthetic and melodic apparatuses, discursive practices, and performance. These creative and critical articulations have given rise to musical (sub)cultures, 'scenes', and movements that extrapolate the confines of textuality and hegemonic history, crossing cultural and geographic borders.

Informed by social memory and particular histories of struggle, drawing on and embodying the diasporic and translocal cross-fertilization of different styles, musical movements of global reach such as hip hop and heavy metal have become illustrative of a defiant counterculture. Musicians of these genres continuously reconstruct their own critical, cultural and political genealogies and challenge the borders of the nation state, in a self-conscious move beyond the separation between art, politics, and life, being able to tackle locally-specified realities while establishing coalition among different places, different cultures, and different communities of resistance.

Within this specific context, this investigation focuses on the translocal musical movements constituted by heavy metal and hip hop and their crystallization in the Global South, forging local 'scenes' and subcultures which, by means of appropriating and re-signifying their foreign counterparts[2] and/or through musical hybridity, have recurrently brought to the fore countercultural discourses of resistance grounded on specificities of geopolitics and identity. Musical hybridity refers here, and initially, to the process of mixing distinct styles and of incorporating elements that figure traditionally in a given music into another; moreover, this oftentimes ambivalent process, as discussed in the analytical chapters,

[2] For the purpose of this investigation, the foreign counterparts of Brazilian Heavy Metal and Rap musical movements (artists and public, or scenes, as discussed further) refer to movements of these two genres as originated in Europe and in the United States (the geographical areas where, respectively, Heavy Metal and Rap emerged—although, as discussed further, from translocal origins).

manifests through intricate dynamics of cultural (re)articulations—of aural, aesthetic and/or discursive nature.

As further discussed, hybridity is not a guarantee of progressive politics; on the contrary, it also constructs unequal relations between a controlling subject and a subsumed object. Namely, in the context of Western music's modernism, these unequal relations were constructed mainly at the hands of Orientalist musics, with the exoticism or erasure of a non-Western cultural, oftentimes racialized object. Oppositely, the treatment of identity and specific geopolitics carried out in a countercultural musical appropriation—the musical treatment of difference, and the (re)construction of place—potentially challenges the "univocal hierarchies of musical value and authority characteristic of an earlier modernism, themselves rooted in the universalism of post-Enlightenment Western aesthetic discourses" (BORN & HESMONDHALGH, 2000, p. 18-9).

As examples of the treatment of difference in music, Brazilian heavy metal band Arandu Arakuaa and national rap pioneers Racionais MC's discursively and actively approach the (sub)cultural and sociogeographical spaces, respectively, of Indigenous communities and *periferias*. On a similar vein, U.S.-based rap-metal hybrid Rage Against the Machine have engaged, on and off stage, in a militant activism based on translocal solidarity, highlighting, namely, the shared struggles of the Zapatistas in Mexico and of the MST (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra) in Brazil, informed by a Chicano politics and culture that extrapolates the colonial divides of the modern world, such as the U.S.-Mexico border. The following chapters provide brief mappings of these musical travels, in order to demonstrate that the great geographic distances between Northeastern Indigenous communities, encampments of occupation of MST families across the country, Southern São Paulo *favelas*, and even the communities of resistance in Chiapas, Mexico, has not been an impediment for the *musicultural* construction of translocal solidarity and coalition. Their histories of struggle and their platforms for resistance against the ongoing, global-reaching operations of an essentially colonial matrix of power share similar nodal points of self-government, interculturality, and creative communal strategies.

The artists investigated here, in making music that crucially oppose Western cultural hegemony along with its colonial cartographies and temporalities, give rise to decolonial and translocal music incarnations. As discussed by Born and Hesmondhalgh, postcolonial analysis

is crucial for the musical treatment of sociocultural difference, not only due to the power-imbued nature of musical appropriation, but because postcolonial critique

> refuses to treat culture as an autonomous and politically innocent domain of social life. Rather, there is a relentless insistence on the importance of culture and knowledge in understanding social power. As has been well-established by recent work in critical musicology, postwar music scholarship has been particularly prone to the view that an analysis of social and political processes is irrelevant for an understanding of culture. (BORN & HESMONDHALGH, 2000, p. 5).

This leads to the questioning of how musical manifestations operate in the subversion of dominant practices and discourses, both in terms of techniques and apparatuses that are available—including musical discursive and melodic elements, performance, and collective representational practices—and the possible implications of their use. To approach these musical articulations in the context of specific musical acts, I focus on heavy metal and hip hop[3] musical movements as conglomerates of musical (sub)cultures and local scenes, not only because of the special attention to political, cultural and social relations that tend to be brought into fold in these genres, but due to the peculiar nature of their musical appropriations in relation to other genres in popular music. The artistic interplays effected by Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa and Rage Against the Machine (among many other artists, in different genres, mentioned alongside them) bear numerous similarities, including their dynamics of borrowing from Western and non-Western styles and musical apparatuses, and their incorporation of elements—which can be musical, discursive and/or representative—that spawn from locally specified narratives and cultural expressions, potentially reshaping the genres in which they belong, as well as shifting their conventional hierarchical organizations in the scopes of music making and performance.

As an initial example of the special attention paid by Brazilian heavy metal to the aforementioned issues, this investigation tackles the musical appropriation embodied by Arandu Arakuaa, a band whose lyrics are predominantly written in Indigenous languages, such as Old Tupi (which belongs in the Tupi-Guaraní linguistic family and was formalized in Brazil in written form by the Spanish Jesuit priest José de Anchieta in 1595), as well as Xerente and Xavante (native languages of Northern Brazilian Indigenous groups). The band's lyrical content centers on Indigenous episteme and cosmologies as a means to expose contemporary issues of demarcation of Native land, the disappearance of Indigenous

[3] Although the debate on the differences and similarities between the terms Hip Hop and Rap has ensued in modern times, in this investigation, Rap is referred to as deriving from Hip Hop (itself a wider cultural movement that, from its output, has involved additional elements such as break dancing, graffiti, art and DJing). Other differences are discussed in Chapter 3.

languages, and the daily violence of neocolonial exploitation and assimilation undergone by Indigenous groups in Brazil and across Latin America. In terms of musical composition and performance, Arandu Arakuaa combines the instruments of traditional heavy metal music (e.g. electric guitars, bass, and drums) with regional instruments of Brazilian Northern and Northeastern musical traditions, such as the *viola caipira* (a Brazilian version of the acoustic guitar), as well as the Indigenous instrumentation of *maraca*, *atabaque* (wooden percussion instruments) and various flutes. An analogous hybridization is displayed in live and music-video performances by means of outfit, as band members often wear heavy metal paraphernalia of predominantly black clothing, leather and spikes, along with Indigenous body paintings and traditional accessories.

This dissertation also pertains to a distinct—yet in many ways similar—form of musical appropriation, namely Brazilian rap music. As Derek Purdue proposes, hip hop constitutes "a form of identity expressed through the politics and pleasure of marginalized youth. In São Paulo, […] tens of thousands of adolescents and young adults look to hip hop as a hopeful opportunity to encounter someone who actually cares who they are" (PARDUE, 2008, p. 1). The historical and sociopolitical contexts of exclusion, inequity and marginality of Brazilian *periferia* are reflected, for instance, in the way the mass media and traditional historiography have recurrently neglected the sociogeographical category of the *favelas*[4] and their residents, erasing their social and cultural intersections. In their lyrics and public statements, artists such as Racionais MC's (arguably Brazil's most influential hip hoppers) and RZO have articulated denunciations of racial and social discrimination, the violent side-effects of the war on drugs, as well as police and state corruption. With the appropriation of United Statesian hip hop, Brazilian hip hoppers have engaged with the redesigning of "race", class, gender and space in the *periferia*[5] "explicitly through a range of material (image and sound) and ideology (discourses, narratives, networking practices)" (p. 3) in an attempt to turn marginality into empowerment and legitimization.

The commitment to translocal perspectives underlying this investigation brings us to different places where different sociocultural concerns are addressed in musical forms, and to a recent period when the genres of heavy metal and hip hop—often deemed incompatible and intrinsically separate in common sense—were combined, their boundaries shattered, giving

[4] Informal, low-income settlements of precarious dwelling, which began to appear in the 70s as a result of massive rural exodus of impoverished populations.

[5] The term refers to the peripheral, marginalized communities from metropolitan areas in Brazil, such as the cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

rise to radical hybrid forms. Rage Against the Machine, for instance, emerged amidst a context of general lack of sociopolitical motivation in U.S. mainstream music of the 1990s. As discussed in Chapter 4, the group, led by the Chicano rapper Zack de La Rocha and the Harvard-educated, guitar virtuoso Tom Morello—who both conciliated music making and political activism from their early career stages—was responsible for a pioneering Molotov cocktail in music with its distinctive, consistent fusion of hip hop, punk rock and heavy metal, while predominantly articulating discourses of identity and political resistance in their musical practice. As Douglas Tewksbury explains, whether RATM's audience knows it or not, the "band comes from a long line of radicalism and activism in its members' families, political activities (both working within and outside of state politics), academic backgrounds, and intellectual and activist pasts" (TEWKSBURY, 2010, p. 91). Their militant activism is centered around singer Zack de La Rocha and lead guitarist Tom Morello, outspoken supporters of local causes in Los Angeles that nevertheless aim at denouncing U.S. imperialist policies of domestic and foreign scope.

In terms of Rage Against the Machine's rap-metal musical hybridity, Chapter 4 presents a brief mapping of the transformations undergone by both hip hop and heavy metal music in the 1980s and 90s. Namely, the incorporation of heavy metal elements in the music of hip hop artists such as Run-DMC was pivotal for rap music's occupation of the mainstream. In the same vein, new Metal subgenres crystalized in the 1990s thanks to the incorporation of rapping alongside riffs. The permeable and porous nature of both genres, which prompted these creative crossings of musical borders, is investigated in the light of decolonial theory, with a focus on translocal and coalitional practices. The analysis also questions the simultaneously cultural and musical separation between hip hop and heavy metal (oftentimes fabricated as natural, either through common sense or paradigms of 'purity' that are present in music scenes, but stem from wide-ranging matters of culture. The translocal emergence of these two genres in Brazil, their configuration today, and the prominence of rap-metal hybrids expose a rather different picture. The discussion, albeit primarily focused on the music of Rage Against the Machine, also connects to the historicity of hip hop's diasporic, Afro-Caribbean origins, its crystallization in the Bronx, and its transfiguration into locally-based forms in Brazil (explored at length in Chapter 2). The historical translocality of hip hop and heavy metal, as we will see, is also rooted in the blues—the Black mother of all modern popular music.

1.3 Hip Hop and Heavy Metal as Cultural Expressive Media

Within this specific context, these forms of musical appropriation are approached here in the scope of their discursive practices and cultural expressions, whose potential opposition to dominant cultures in the Global South is marked by the denouncing of ongoing (neo)colonial violence and invisibility affecting Indigenous and Black[6] marginalized communities in the settings of the three musical outputs (across Brazil and the U.S.-Mexico divide). The sociopolitical claims present in the music and activism of Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa and Rage Against the Machine cast a fresh eye on issues that have traditionally been ignored in the mass the media, art incarnations, political projects and educational environments in terms of the histories of marginalized groups in those settings. With this investigation, I aim at bringing the (counter)cultural musical appropriations of heavy metal and hip hop to the fore in a coalitional endeavor, that is, from a translocal perspective that acknowledges not only the shared histories of violence and diverse cross-cultural elements constitutive of both mobility and locality,[7] but also what circulates within and between these localities, such as ideas, capital, and music. Although hip hop and heavy metal movements are often seen as conflicting—not only due to the highly contrasting melodic apparatuses shaping them and the lyrical contents that usually figure in the two genres, but also in relation to the configuration of their audiences and their scenes—there are crucial discursive and representative elements linking them, tackling policy issues that manifest daily and violently in the conjunctures of both Brazil and the U.S., and whose roots trace back to the colonial/modern histories of these countries.

Additionally, the investigation problematizes the complex dynamics through which musical appropriations (approached here in terms of specific musical components of hip hop

[6] In this dissertation, the use of the capitalized B for Black bears recognition and respect for the people of African diaspora, as crucially campaigned by W.E.B. Du Bois in the mid-1920s, publicly demanding and encouraging that "book publishers, newspaper editors and magazines capitalize the N in Negro when referring to Black people. Even though Du Bois himself didn't use the word Negro consistently—one of his most famous works, after all, is "The Souls of Black Folk"—it was the official name for the race, and as such, Du Bois wanted that word to confer respect on the page as well as in daily life" (THARPS, 2014). Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/the-case-for-black-with-a-capital-b.html). Similarly, the capitalized I in Indigenous is used here in respect for peoples, communities and cultures whose histories have been marked by colonial violence that is present to this day.

[7] The mobility of particular interest for this investigation concerns mainly the U.S.-Mexico border and the situation of undocumented immigrants, as treated in the discursive practice of Rage Against the Machine. However, the dynamics of departure effected in mobility do not occur only in terms of transnational migration, but also translocal (as approached by Arandu Arakuaa in relation to the displacement of Indigenous people). Similarly, the notion of locality as physical, geographical areas or borders (such as a *favela*, an Indigenous reserve, or a town at the U.S.-Mexico divide) "is not useful because it curtails the realities of a globalized world such as, diversifying migration flows or global economic interdependencies" (PETH, 2014, p. 1).

and heavy metal as hybrid forms, informed and nurtured by the social relations of peripheral, Indigenous, and border communities and their histories) take shape in a process constituted by the borrowing of their foreign 'Western' counterparts, while simultaneously recreating and re-signifying them with the usage of music apparatuses and narrativizations that are locally centered. The (re)articulations of place and social identity carried out by Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa and Rage Against the Machine are often reflected in their activism on and off stage, and in their usage of melodic apparatuses (traditional or forgeign), including local instrumentation, sampling techniques, and even the body as instrument.

The plethora of elements that come into play in a given musical work or act (lyrical and melodic complexions, performance, visual systems, marketing, etc.) are used strategically in musical appropriations, with internal and external implications. The internal implications may include the changes (collisions and coalitions) affecting the musical genre in itself, such as the distinctive musical and visual hybridity embodied by the Folk Metal group Arandu Arakuaa. On the other hand, external implications concern the impact that a musical appropriation potentially causes and receives within specific geopolitics and in the treatment of cultural differences, such as Indigenous episteme articulated in the group's lyrical content and the Native aesthetics displayed in live performances and music videos.

As suggested in the first section of this chapter, approaching the musical treatment of difference means challenging the idea of music as an autonomous, politically innocent, non-representational art form, as historically claimed in Western art music. The analytical chapters of this study discuss the ways in which these musical manifestations of hip hop and heavy metal approach shared histories of colonial violence and contemporary colonialist culture, bringing them together in a perspective of coevalness. As discussed by Laurent Dubois,

> the approach to the history of music, in which non-European societies, particularly those in Africa, are seen as essentially 'broken down' on the path to the progress exemplified by Europe, was just one manifestation of the broader ways in which anthropological theory developed at the time. Johannes Fabian famously dubbed this approach the 'denial of coevalness', a way of seeing the world in which various contemporary societies are interpreted as literally living in a different historical epoch. Its interpretive, moral, and political limitations–its misplaced confidence in progress and its unfounded hubris–are by now clear to most scholars. But this vision of the world still undergirds a surprising amount of work within the field of music. (DUBOIS, 2016, p. 8).

Linking the histories of heavy metal and hip hop in a perspective of coevalness depends fundamentally on the understanding of the American colonial/modern past as conflated with contemporaneity. This exercise departs from the identification of the issues

apprehended in the discursive practices of the musical appropriations (Arandu Arakuaa, Racionais MC's, and Rage Against the Machine) in relation to specific geopolitics in Brazil and on the U.S.-Mexico border.

The significance of this investigation encompasses three fundamental issues. Firstly, it aims at highlighting the complexity regarding musical appropriations in contemporaneity following the precepts of Cultural Studies. The analysis of the above-mentioned musical incarnations is historicized *vis-à-vis* previous musical and cultural movements marked by artistic appropriation, from the Afro-Caribbean forms that long preceded the Blues and were influential in the emergence of U.S. hip hop, to markedly modern Brazilian genres such as *tropicália* and *manguebeat* (important musical movements that exercised hybridity; the latter also comprised the interplay with traditional heavy metal elements). In continuity with a long history of roots and routes, the apparatuses present in the musical borrowings embodied by heavy metal and hip hop in the Global South have taken renewed form. I shall also stress the importance of such musical appropriations in denouncing and dealing with social problems in specific geopolitics aimed at the *favelas* and Indigenous communities, potentially fostering social awareness, democratic and communitarian education, as well as (re)organizing sites of personhood and agency from within historically oppressed environments. Finally, I dwell on the interdisciplinarity and innovativeness of this investigation, for even though previous works on musical appropriations have been developed in PPGI, and the objects of the corpus have been addressed in academic studies mentioned further in this chapter, the specific topic of this dissertation has not as yet been scholarly investigated. Regarding the personal significance of this work, I draw on notions from my own perspective as a musician and teacher whose intellectual and ethical formation has consistently been interwoven with music. Therefore, this dissertation should draw attention to the fact that the musical appropriations hereby investigated can have a crucial role in the advancement and diffusion of innovative forms of education, and that transdisciplinarity constitutes one of the fundamental means by which this goal can be achieved, especially in the development of countercultural and decolonial perspectives in and through music.

1.4 Musical (Sub)cultures and their Politics of Transfiguration

My corpus centers on specific works by the Brazilian groups Racionais MC's (from São Paulo) and Arandu Arakuaa (from the federal capital Brasília), and Los Angeles-based Rage Against the Machine. Racionais MC's' iconic album *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*, released in 1997, is addressed in its entirety for being a 'concept album', that is, a music album whose songs are "unified by a theme, which can be instrumental, compositional, narrative, or lyrical. In this form, the album changed from a collection of heterogeneous songs into a narrative work with a single theme, in which individual songs segue into one another" (SHUKER, 2005, p. 7-8)—this musical/narrative quality is addressed at length in Chapter 2. In *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*, Racionais MC's bring forth a multiplicity of voices and characters, in an intricate narrativization of in peripheral realities related through shared oppressions. Regarding Arandu Arakuaa, specific songs from their albums *Kó Yby Oré* (2013), *Wdê Nnãkrda* (2015), *Mrã Waze* (2018), and *Ainãka* (2021) are addressed in order to bring into fold the band's increasing prioritizing of Indigenous and regional instrumentation across their musical trajectory, shifting the conventional hierarchical organization of folk metal hybridity. The analysis of particular songs also highlights specific lyrical contents centered on Indigenous episteme, cosmologies, and rights to land. Rage Against the Machine's "People of the Sun" (from the album Evil Empire, 1996) brings to the fore key elements of Chicano/a politics and culture aimed at specific sociopolitical conjunctures of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands; however, in a live performance, the band dedicates the song to the Brazilian Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra, highlighting the movement's shared struggles in relation to the communities of resistance in Chiapas, Mexico, in a call for translocal solidarity.

I aim at investigating how the three objects, in terms of musical devices and lyrical content, are useful for coalitional debates on social identities, political resistance, and (coulter)culture in the context of heavy metal and hip hop, centered on the specific sociogeographical spaces of Indigenous communities and *periferias* in Brazil, and the U.S.-Mexico border. In spite of the geographic distance between the distinct settings addressed in their music, cultural expressions carried out by Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa and Rage Against the Machine have been grounded on coevalness, interculturality, and translocal communal strategies, constituting potential platforms of resistance in the context of global-reaching Coloniality. Their discursive and musical practices and their militant activism reveal that even though locality is productive of and produced by the development of the different

music scenes to which the three groups belong, their scenes are never exclusively local, rather, always translocal. This condition stems not only from the diverse borrowings and travels effected in these music scenes (and virtually every scene in popular music, I suggest) in a global context where social, cultural and economic conjunctures of one locality are interrelated to those of another, but also from the fact that the very categorization of music genres is highly unstable, as musical hybridity oftentimes underlies their development. The analysis also pertains, although on smaller scale, to interviews, music videos, filmed performances and public statements to enrich the understanding of musical performance and appropriation (simultaneously a product and a process) as social practices.

The musical appropriations embodied by Arandu Arakuaa, Racionais MC's, and Rage Against the Machine, each in their own terms and through their own representations of cultural locality, operate in peculiar ways of boundary crossing inside and outside their respective musical movements: coalition is brought to the fore in their critical reflections and concrete acts with the aim to promote transformations within and beyond their specific settings, towards self-worth, liberation, communal well-being, and sustainability—towards more ethical, tolerant, and regenerative social landscapes. Their transgressive, countercultural musics answer back to Western cultural hegemony and developmentalist temporality, potentially unsettling its fabricated boundaries between self and other, as well as the colonial borders of our modern world.

Towards a horizon of sociocultural regeneration, they challenge cultural dichotomies that have been continuously (re)formed by the coloniality of power, such as West-East, modern-colonial, global-local, and self-other. Their attention to subaltern experiences, cultures and epistemologies that have been historically erased, subtracted, and anachronized as past and impoverished is an attempt to deal with daily oppressions faced across the Global South. Thus, theirs is a project of healing—a decolonial musical practice.

In light of this context, this investigation finds support in Decolonial theory and Cultural studies on identity, agency, and (counter)culture, as presented in the next section, with the goal to propose a framework for translocal/coalitional thinking in/through music forms. In accordance with the theoretical and epistemic choices, I also draw on notions from my own perspective as a heavy metal musician who was introduced in the style from a long enthusiasm for Brazilian hip hop music, in order to develop my scholarly self-reflexivity and

provide a critical introduction to the cultural study of the musics of *headbangers* and *hip hoppers* as belonging to essentially translocal scenes.

This study accepts as a point of departure the notion that music constitutes a representational art form, and that such condition pervades not only a given music's lyrical, discursive content, but also its form and style, expanding across and beyond local scenes, (re)signifying identities of a musical or sociocultural kind. From the understanding of musics that "have drawn upon, or repudiated, popular, non-Western, and ethnic musics, and what these relations mean in cultural and political terms [to] address the nature of specifically musical representation" (BORN & HESMONDHALGH, 2000, p. 2), I aim at demonstrating that the musical works addressed here, through the articulation of musical borrowings, melodic and discursive apparatuses, as well as a marked cultural and political commitment, can also enforce an inverted act, that is, appropriating Western musics and adapting them to local specificities—a multifaceted process that enables musical hybridity to be "rebound from its discursive origins in colonial fantasies and oppressions and […] become instead a practical and creative means of cultural rearticulation and resurgence from the margins" (p. 19), in other words, to be liberated from colonial/modern borders, and to thrive in their belongings to multiple, permeable, interwoven borderlands.

Racionais MC's have been the most successful rap group in the country and were among the pioneering acts who, in the late 1980s, drawing on United Statesian hip hop scenes, established the genre nationally while turning to local causes. Bringing together the heavy metal genre and Indigenous, regional, and traditional Brazilian musics, Arandu Arakuaa has become one of the main outputs of the subgenre known as 'folk metal' in Brazil. U.S.-based Rage Against the Machine occupied the mainstream with a shocking, politically-drawn mixture of rap and metal, reshaping both genres, as well as giving rise to new ones (such as Nu Metal).

Concerning this corpus, musical and lyrical contents are investigated closely in relation to the theoretical framework further presented; due to space constraints, as well as relevance for the topic, specific songs from different albums constituting my corpus have been selected, as opposed to the albums in their entirety—the exception is Racionais MC's *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*, addressed wholly, as previously mentioned, for being a concept album whose songs are often interconnected thematically and/or even aurally. The 1997 album's lyrical content explores a translocal dynamics by narrativizing historically inscribed

realities of Brazilian *periferias* while also attending to local specificities; from this scope, a redesigning of marginality is articulated in opposition to overintegrated ideas of nationhood. Songs such as "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3", "Periferia é Periferia" and "Diário de um Detento" address, respectively, the precariousness and difficulties undergone in the *periferias* (providing indexes of social inequity and violence affecting mainly the Black youth), and how problems faced in a given community (in the context of singer Mano Brown, Capão Redondo, in the capital São Paulo) are shared by other marginalized localities.

Also from a coalitional perspective, Arandu Arakuaa engages on a meticulous musical treatment of Indigenous culture and episteme while evoking translocal solidarity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities across Latin America. The present corpus centers on specific songs: "A-î-Kuab R-asy" (whose lyrics tackle the colonial invasion of Brazil by the Portuguese Empire in 1500 and the resulting colonial violence) and "Kaapora" (in reference to the Tupi-Guaraní mythological deity, often portrayed as a feral Indigenous being who overwatches the forest and its animals)—from the album *Kó Yby Oré*, released in 2013—, "Watô Akwẽ" (bringing forth the connection of Indigenous identity to land, location, and belonging) and "Povo Vermelho" (their only song written in Portuguese, and whose lyrical content addresses the physical and epistemic violence of ongoing Coloniality)—from *Wdê Nnãkrda*, 2015—, "Huku Hêmba" (a musical tribute to the jaguar and its important symbolisms in Indigenous cosmologies)—from *Mrã Waze*, 2018—and "Kaburéûasu" (which, in turn, addresses the healing energies of the owl as understood in shamanic rituals that unsettle the separation between science and spirituality).

Finally, the song "People of the Sun" (*Evil Empire,* 1996), by Rage Against the Machine, is analyzed in order to approach the history of violence of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, drawing a parallel between contemporary and colonial events, and the struggles of the Zapatista Movement. The discussion also pertains to the translocal politics in RATM's music and social activism, relating them with social movements in Brazil (namely, the Landless Workers' Movement, or MST). Aside from the discursive and musical contents presented in the albums, visual information (displayed via stage performances and the song's official music video), and specific external, extra-musical events (pertaining to the lives of the artists and their social activism) are also analyzed in order to deepen the debate, as it departs from the notion that musical works do not operate in isolation from their sociocultural and geopolitical contexts. Other songs by Rage Against the Machine are addressed, though to a minor extent, such as "Maria", from the 1999 album *The Battle of Los Angeles*, narrating the

struggles of a woman crossing the U.S.-Mexico border under oppressive conditions of physical and psychological struggle. The music of Rage Against the Machine is ubiquitously drawn on political and sociocultural contents, and some songs are especially marked by Chicano politics and forms of activism. Thus, I aim at investigating the rap-metal hybrid in terms of the melodic apparatuses and the discursive elements, discussing key elements of Chicano/a politics and culture and their (re)articulation of the Indigenous. The translocal perspectives evoked in the music of Rage Against the Machine seek coalition across different localities, from the communities of resistance in Chiapas to the various encampments of the MST in Brazil.

1.5 The Musical Treatment of Identity

In approaching these musical works, the investigation centers on three different sets of frameworks. Firstly, it pertains to theories regarding music as appropriation; this is followed by a discussion presenting a framework that essentially draws on notions from decolonial and cultural studies; finally, in the light of translocal perspectives, discussions on Modernity tackle the relationship between the histories of different localities as well as the different musical movements addressed in the research.

As proposed in the initial section of this chapter, the focus on musical borrowings as performed by Western artists facilitates an understanding of Modernity's effects on music from the early 20th Century to this day. As Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh put forward, a perspective that portrays the act of borrowing from and appropriating other musical cultures "as primarily an open-minded and empathic gesture of interest in and fascination with marginalized musics […] holds the danger of treating non-Western cultures purely as a resource for the reinvigoration of Western culture" (2000, p. 8). Modernity (or rather *Modernities*, as this study approaches different historical moments in Brazil and other parts of the Americas), likewise, ultimately constituted an attempt from the West to solve its own anxieties by looking differently (but not quite) at the rest, or the homogenized non-West.

Shedding light on different geopolitical contexts of Modernity, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1977) became fundamental for more conscientious treatments of the social, cultural and economic interplays of the period in challenging Eurocentric discourse, making this and other works by the author valuable for the development of literary criticism, art

history, musicology, and numerous fields of study. In Modernity, Said puts forward, Europe was already a "cultural, political and material enterprise" effecting influence worldwide, mainly due to the fact that the "'scramble for Africa' was by no means limited to Africa", rather, it emerged from

> a long and slow process of appropriation by which Europe, or the European awareness of the Orient, transformed itself from being textual and contemplative into being administrative, economic, and even military. The fundamental change was a spatial and geographical one, or rather it was a change in the quality of geographical and spatial apprehension so far as the Orient was concerned. The centuries-old designation of geographical space to the east of Europe as 'Oriental' was partly political, partly doctrinal, and partly imaginative; it implied no necessary connection between actual experience of the Orient and knowledge of what is Oriental. (SAID, 1977, p. 210-11).

This Western apprehension of knowledge regarding the non-West, according to Said, was in various ways infused with exoticism, albeit presumably resultant from an "identification by sympathy", similar to that which once enabled "an eighteenth-century mind [to] breach the doctrinal walls erected between the West and Islam and see hidden elements of kinship between himself and the Orient" (p. 119). Said turns to music in order to illustrate the idea, mentioning two compositions by Wolfgang Mozart: both "'The Magic Flute' (in which Masonic codes intermingle with visions of a benign Orient) and 'The Abduction from the Seraglio' locate a particularly magnanimous form of humanity in the Orient". Said proposes that Mozart's sympathetic move eastwards is, however, not essentially different from the exotic sublimity found in pretechnical, pre-Romantic and Romantic orientalist representations. These representations and imaginations were based on and limited to "Sensuality, promise, terror, sublimity, idyllic pleasure, intense energy" and paved the way for Modern Orientalist structures "to *classify* nature and man into types" (p. 120; emphasis added), such as savage, primitive, and abnormal, as opposed to civilized, modern, and normative.

The critique of such (orientalist) representations, thus, remains crucial for our understanding of the rearticulation of identity and identification through discourse. If on the one hand, as Stuart Hall proposes, common sense language leads us to assume that "identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance", on the other hand, and "in contrast with the 'naturalism' of this definition, the discursive approach sees identification as a construction, a process never completed—always 'in process'" (1996, p. 2). Hall recognizes the determinate conditions

(both material and symbolic) that sustain identification, but also highlights its contingency, its reconstitution through articulation.[8] Hall's claim that debates on identities should be situated in terms of *difference* stems, thus, from this interplay—one that destabilizes the idea of a unified self (now, then, and always devoid of a core, or an essence) and challenges the perspective of an "unchanging 'oneness' or cultural belongingness underlying all the other superficial differences", even among people with shared traditions. These debates should thus pertain to "those historically specific developments and practices which have disturbed the relatively 'settled' character of many populations and cultures, above all in relation to the processes of globalization […], modernity and the processes of forced and 'free' migration" (1996, p. 4). As further discussed in the following chapter, this idea is especially relevant for our understanding of the global and local dimensions of diaspora, and how they permeate the emergence of artistic movements such as hip hop.

Hall crucially favors the use of historical, linguistic and cultural resources for the understanding of identities as fluid, ever-changing processes of becoming, as opposed to an original, transcendental notion of identity encapsulated in a historical past, in a time and place where *essence* supposedly lies and from which it can be objectively recovered. In this changing process we call identification, resources and discourses (for instance, we can think of tales, books, documents, and art incarnations such as music) operate in the construction and in the narrativization of the self; in other words, the process of belongingness through which identities arise has "discursive, material [and] political effectivity", but also a fictional nature, being, "partly, in the imaginary (as well as the symbolic) and therefore, always, partly constructed in fantasy, or at least within a fantasmatic field". The author highlights the discursive, political, cultural and representational constituents of the continuous flow of identification, arguing that it is not about "'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. Identities are therefore constituted within, not outside representation" (1996, p. 4). This notion is key for the debate on postcolonial racialized and gendered subjectivities, the articulation of identity politics, and the facing of social phenomena such as race and gender-based discrimination (both vulgar and structural), for the play of difference flows in the domains of the real and the symbolic. As a representational medium, music can also play a role in the articulation of identity.

[8] "all articulations are properly relations of 'no necessary correspondence', i.e. rounded on that contingency which 'inactivates the historical'" (LACLAU, 1990, p 35, apud HALL, 1996, p. 14).

For better or worse, music as a representational medium also plays a role in (re)producing languages of nationality and local/cultural belonging in which certain identities are treated as mutually exclusive—the myriad spaces of continuity between them is sometimes erased. As sociologist and cultural studies scholar Paul Gilroy discusses, nationality, ethnicity, authenticity, and cultural integrity are characteristically modern phenomena that

> crystallised with the revolutionary transformations of the West at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries and involved novel typologies and modes of identification. Any shift towards a postmodern condition should not, however, mean that the conspicuous power of these modern subjectivities and the movements they articulated has been left behind. Their power has, if anything, grown, and their ubiquity as a means to make political sense of the world is currently unparalleled by the languages of class and socialism. [Political problems] arise from the fatal junction of the concept of nationality with the concept of culture and the affinities and affiliations which link the blacks of the West to one of their adoptive, parental cultures: the intellectual heritage of the West since the Enlightenment. (GILROY, *The Black Atlantic*, 1993, p. 2).

Gilroy highlights the dangers that remain very much alive in the fatal junction of the concept of nationality with the concept of culture—it is safe to assume that he refers here to how ideological moves in this direction, including U.S.- and Euro-centric nationalist paradigms based on *otherings* of various kinds, have in turn underlined discourses and practices of xenophobia and racial segregation, for instance.

Still, the author adds that pursuits for social and political autonomy in the scope of these racialized *others* have often followed similarly essentialist/exceptionalist conceptions: "the reflexive cultures and consciousness of the European settlers and those of the Africans they enslaved, the 'Indians' they slaughtered, and the Asians they indentured were not, even in situations of the most extreme brutality, sealed off hermetically from each other" (GILROY, 1993, p. 2). This is one of the reasons why cultural expressions that conjure up the translocal dynamics of African diaspora along with its different Black vernacular cultures supply important foundations for our understanding of cultural identities. Rescuing and at the same time casting a fresh eye on elements of political sensibility and transnational creativity, diasporic cultural expressions potentially unsettle the euro/ethnocentric constructions on which the very *evolution* and *progress* of Western Civilization have been ideologically fabricated, enforcing a mythological naturalness of linear development.

1.6 Black Atlantic Creativity and Hip Hop as a Counterculture of Modernity

Gilroy proposes that the essentialist status enjoyed by the colonial national boundaries of today and the problematic assumptions of cultural absolutism that often go along with it lead us back to the history and creativity of the intercultural and transnational formation that he calls the Black Atlantic. More than a point of departure for considering the histories of resistance to slavery, which were followed by anti-colonial struggles across the Americas, and the various moves towards meaningful citizenship in post-emancipation societies, Black Atlantic history also reveals how movements of cultural expression were informed by and also informed these struggles, and how they have been transfigured into contemporary manifestations of translocal cultural politics and art movements.

The author brings attention to hip hop culture as the most significant and powerful expressive medium of U.S. urban Black poor; a culture that emerged from translocal Afro-Caribbean formations and was crystalized in the Bronx, before acquiring global-reach and giving rise to new, locally-based counterparts. As Gilroy explains,

> The musical components of hip hop are a hybrid form nurtured by the social relations of the South Bronx where Jamaican sound system culture was transplanted during the 1970s and put down new roots. In conjunction with specific technological innovations, this routed and re-rooted Caribbean culture set in train a process that was to transform black America's sense of itself and a large portion of the popular music industry as well. […] This unlikely convergence is part of the history of hip hop because black music is so often the principal symbol of racial authenticity. Analysing it leads rapidly and directly back to the status of nationality and national cultures in a post-modem world where nation states are being eclipsed by a new economy of power that accords national citizenship and national boundaries a new significance. (GILROY, 1993, p. 33-4).

Foregrounding the development of hip hop music enables us to better understand the processes of affiliation and association, both in musical and politico-cultural terms, that mark the translocal dynamics of diaspora, and how black cultural productions manifested in the milieu of distinct yet similar communities across Latin America have given rise to locally-based cultural expressions that attend to their own specific geopolitics, determining and leading their own responses to Modernity's anxieties and failures.

Gilroy initially approaches Modernity in terms of the transformations of the West in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries, departing from the critique of Enlightenment assumptions to the reconfiguration of ideas about ethnicity through the appeal to national and often racial particularity that informed, for instance, modern European aesthetics. In this

context, the author highlights the history and the role of the image of the Black and how it became "a marker for moments of cultural relativism and to support the production of aesthetic judgments of a supposedly universal character to differentiate, for example, between authentic music and, as Hegel puts it, 'the most detestable noise'" (1993, p. 8). Followed by the exhaustion of the very idea of European civilization, tradition, and intellectual heritage, especially with the horrors of World War I and II, Western modernity assumed a global character, but manifested very differently in different regions, so we speak of *modernities* instead, each with their novel racial, ethnic and social typologies and identities.

Namely, the notion of 'Black Modernity', as developed by sociologist Antônio Sérgio Guimarães, starts from an understanding of the efforts—in different regions throughout the first half of the 20th Century—of Black intellectuals in search of the sociopolitical, cultural and symbolic inclusion of Black populations into Western society. Guimarães, in "A Modernidade Negra", discusses the different manifestations of such modernities in distinct spaces and moments. In general, the projects of Black Modernity came from an initial movement of more inclusive representations developed by European avant-garde and intellectuals (during the Romanticism period) in terms of 'barbaric' nativism, a perspective that constituted, as discussed below, an attempt to solve the anxieties of Western modernity. This romantic twist was followed by a new moment in which Black intellectuals began to exercise their own representations, exposing various issues of European colonial modernity. Following, I briefly trace spatiotemporal demarcations, mentioning Black Modernities in the United States and the French Antilles, but focusing on Latin America (Brazil, more precisely), and highlighting the epistemic counter-hegemonic critiques articulated by figures such as W.E.B Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, and Abdias do Nascimento, constituents of important anticolonial projects as countercultures of Western modernity.

In the early twentieth century, the U.S. Black population was segregated after the institution of the Jim Crow system of 1896. W.E.B. Du Bois was among the group of intellectuals who sought, alongside Black art vanguards, the recovery of their people's self-esteem and equal rights in social, educational, and political spheres. The Harlem Renaissance emerged from this context, with diverse manifestations in the fields of music (such as Jazz and the Blues), religion (including Christianity, Islam, Judaism and traditional African religions), historiography (mainly through the monthly journal *The Crisis*), and the arts (painter William Johnson and sculptor Meta Fuller were important names). The aftermath of World War I saw important projects, as put forth by Du Bois, aimed at producing and

diffusing Black Literature, and articulating decolonization in Africa (which culminated in the organization of the Pan-African Congress in Paris by Du Bois and Ida Gibbs Hunt). Du Bois's ultimate goal, however, was the rehabilitation of Black people after the dire forms of dislocation undergone in the post-war period:

> Years have passed away since then,—ten, twenty, forty; forty years of national life, forty years of renewal and development, and yet the swarthy spectre sits in its accustomed seat at the Nation's feast. In vain do we cry to this our vastest social problem: The Nation has not yet found peace from its sins; the freedman has not yet found in freedom his promised land. Whatever of good may have come in these years of change, the shadow of a deep disappointment rests upon the Negro people,—a disappointment all the more bitter because the unattained ideal was unbounded save by the simple ignorance of a lowly people. (DU BOIS, 1903, p. 7).

Du Bois's project is marked, from the outset, by an intrinsic duality that places it in a kind of double consciousness: being Black and being United Statesian, a duality with potentialities and limitations: "One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (DU BOIS, 1903, p. xxiii).

From a diasporic perspective, Du Bois articulates a critique of the modern colonial rhetoric by exposing Western capitalist presumptions and the fabricated idea of progress: "The silently growing assumption of this age is that the probation of races is past, and that the backward races of today are of proven inefficiency and not worth the saving. [This is] the arrogance of peoples irreverent toward Time and ignorant of the deeds of men" (p. 197). From the critique of this rhetoric, Du Bois argues that the Black subject invariably experiences a low-self-esteem complex ("How does it feel to be a problem?" [p. 4]), revealing the simultaneous invisibility and hypervisibility of a double consciousness.

A similar inferiority complex is discussed by Frantz Fanon. In *Black Skins, White Masks*, the author explores a series of cultural, political and psychopathological characters and effects of racism, having reconciled his intellectual production with a close engagement in the Algerian war of independence. Fanon argues that the modern colonial rhetoric constitutes "a series of propositions that slowly and subtly—with the help of books, newspapers, schools and their texts, advertisements, films, radio—work their way into one's mind and shape one's view of the world of the group to which one belongs" (FANON, 1952, p. 118). In spite of this, in the French-African Black Modernity, the discourse of a republican tradition of non-discrimination of the conquered peoples prevailed ("In the Antilles that view of the world is white because no black voice exists" [p. 118]). Fanon's critique exposes the

violent character of the modern colonial rhetoric, latent in metropolitan culture, as a burial of the sociopolitical expression of Black people.

Analogously to the French Antillean condition and its fabricated presumptions of 'non-discrimination', Latin American Black Modernity was in various ways marked by the ideal of miscegenation. As Antônio Guimarães discusses, this ideal sought to incorporate as 'popular' diverse ethnic and racial subcultures. José Vasconcelos, in Mexico, as well as Gilberto Freyre, in Brazil, are representatives of national projects of *mestiçagem* based on premises of overcoming the wide-spread, pessimist and racist views from the 19th Century. Thus, Guimarães argues that Black Modernity in these countries was in many ways mistaken for and subsumed to national modernity (GUIMARÃES, 2002, p. 11). At the heart of the matter lies a differential factor of Brazilian Black Modernity in relation to the Franco-Antillean and the United Statesian projects. For instance, the notion of *mestiçagem* as articulated in Brazil (the modern roots of what we now call 'racial democracy') broke with ideas of pan-Africanism for part of Black political, intellectual, avant-garde and artistic fronts, which remained detached from African art and culture, seeking the status of nationality and national culture. In Mexico, however, *mestizaje* was resignified—namely, in the theorizing of Gloria Anzaldúa's *La Frontera*, it becomes a demystification of social and territorial borders of colonial nature (discussed in Chapter 4). Contrastingly, Guimarães explains that in Brazil large part of the Black population identified as Brazilians and as 'mestiços', never as Africans, in order to differentiate themselves from foreigners and recent immigrants (GUIMARÃES, 2002, p. 11). The Brazilian Black press presented a voyeuristic character in their critical angle of race-based violence, denouncing cases of racist segregation and brutality taking place in the United States and other countries, while turning its back on local problems. Sporadic moves towards African and Indigenous cultural expressions in this early period of Brazilian Black Modernity remained idealized in projects carried out by the modernist intellectual elite, among which figured the famed Anthropophagy of Oswald de Andrade.

Things began to change in the 1970s, when the Black/Mestiço people, as well as nationalist intellectuals, reinforced a decidedly Afro-Brazilian culture as a means to emphasize precisely their national originality (GUIMARÃES, 2002, p. 17). In this political shift figures Abdias do Nascimento's 'Quilombismo', employed through the increased contact with Afro-Brazilian activist entities, strengthening anti-racist public acts and prompting the creation of the MNU—or Movimento Negro Unificado contra o Racismo e a Discriminação

Racial, which would become one of the major catalysts for the development of Brazilian hip hop, as discussed in the following chapter.

Guimarães points out a few possible explanations for the Afro-Brazilian sociopolitical turn:

> Algumas respostas a essa questão me parecem possíveis. A que eu acho mais razoável é de que os problemas que conduziram à formação da identidade negra brasileira nos anos 1930, de modo paralelo à identidade nacional, tenham permanecido e, de certo modo, se aguçado. Esses fatores estão resumidos nas enormes desigualdades raciais, em termos de oportunidade de vida, entre brancos e negros. A diferença entre o processo de formação étnico-racial dos anos 1930 e dos anos 1970—o primeiro voltado para o interior (reforço da nacionalidade brasileira) e o segundo voltado para o exterior (reforço das raízes africanas)—pode ser creditada, tanto às mudanças internacionais (maior circulação de idéias e, conseqüente maior proximidade entre os negros de todo o mundo; onipresença da cultura de massa, etc.), quanto internas (a crise da identidade nacional brasileira, trazida pela derrocada do sistema de "substituição de importações" do pósguerra, e do seu relativo isolamento cultural). (GUIMARÃES, 2002, p. 18).

Finally, Guimarães questions the idea of 'late-modernity' or postmodernity, understanding (as does Gilroy), the differences and specificities among Black Modernities, and that the power of modern phenomena such as nationality, ethnicity, authenticity, and cultural integrity has actually grown. This perspective is key in historicizing and politicizing the potential analytic strategies of Black Modernity as a constituent of anticolonial projects and in breaking with the homogenizing fabrications of Western modernity, exposing its salvationist and universalist rhetoric. Black Modernities bring pluri-verses to the fore, congruent at certain moments and conflicting in others, as we can see from the parallels between the United Statesian, French Antillean, and Brazilian conditions. Problematic socialization processes in the latter remain tied to contemporary issues, including the systematic invisibility, neglect and the violation of rights suffered by racialized/marginalized communities. Old ideas of 'miscegenation' and of the non-existence of racism in Brazil continue to be echoed in the myth of racial democracy, corroborated discursively in various incarnations of the arts, the mass media, and state policies.

The emergence of national hip hop opposes two problematic aspects of Brazilian Black Modernity: firstly, rap has become an appropriation of a foreign musical movement (specifically, United Statesian hip hop), breaking with the ideal of international isolation of Black Brazilians inherited from Black Modernity, in which, in a way, "colorblind ideology could be supported by the racism it denied. In effect, the demand not to see color meant

supporting a particular color: white" (GORDON, 2008, p. 21);[9] secondly, insofar as this musical appropriation turns to the local specificities of the socio-geographic category of Brazilian favelas and their residents, addressing issues of State policies, (ab)uses of police power, and ethnic and class conflicts, rap brings Black invisibility into fold, and in some cases, exposes it in mainstream media. The musical production of Brazilian hip hop, in the form of lyrics (testimonies of what newspapers have continuously neglected) and public performances (in shows and events of activism that gather people from inside and outside the peripheral spaces, prompting one of the rare sources of cultural expression, knowledge and leisure free from the enclosure of a racist democracy) has thus a humanizing and formative role in the lives of individuals whose subjectivity has been historically denied.

From this context, Gustavo Rolim highlights, in "Revolução e cultura no pensamento de Frantz Fanon e Amílcar Cabral", that one of Fanon's key thoughts is to consider the cultural attribute of racism, and that it does not merely refer to the discrimination of an individual, "mas de 'uma certa forma de existir' […]. Imperaria a necessidade de destruir os sistemas de referência deste povo. Porém, a intenção não é de destruição total da cultura autóctone e, sim, uma 'mumificação cultural'" (ROLIM, 2016, p. 182).[10] Race-based violence encompasses sociocultural alienation of a distinctively violent kind, manifested systematically through the denial of specific ways of saying and ways of being.

Brazilian hip hop crystalized in the 1980s with the crossfertilization of U.S. hip hop forms, and is approached by anthropologist Derek Purdue as an alternative ideology of representation and personhood, used for the (re)designing of marginality in Brazilian *periferias,* "positioned in relation to a cluster of primarily national hegemonic discourses and practices represented in such terms as cordial, racial democracy, tropicalism, and tradition. Hip hoppers refer to this national hegemonic formation as the system (*o sistema*)" (PARDUE, 2008, p. 12). Brazilian hip hop artists such as Racionais MC's have strategically tackled these nationalist paradigms as part of Brazil's problematic socialization process, linked to the public neglect and invisibility, as well as the daily brutality and discrimination affecting the socio-geographic category of Brazilian *favelas*.

[9] Quoted from the Foreword by Lewis R. Gordon, in Black Skin, White Masks (2008).
[10] "but of 'a certain way of existing' […]. It would be necessary to destroy the reference systems of this people. However, the goal is not the total destruction of the autochthonous culture but, rather, a 'cultural mummification'" (my translation).

Purdue argues that the musical appropriations carried out in Brazilian hip hop (and other acts outside the U.S.) follow no pre-made templates in relation to Black cultural politics, but rather pertains to

> a cross-culturally shared idea of 'skills/z,' 'respect,', 'reality,' and performative authority with multiple origins and uses. For example, it is not any sort of U.S. hip hop model of 'nationalism' (political, cultural, aesthetic, or otherwise) per se, but rather a translocal sense of 'blackness' and 'attitude' moving among metropolitan areas of New York, London, Rio, Salvador, São Paulo, Capetown, Kingston, Miami, and Paris that is important. (PARDUE, 2008, p. 11).

Appropriating the United Statesian musical style while crossing geographic and cultural boundaries, Brazilian hip hoppers (among whom Racionais MC's remain the biggest exponent) often foreground multiple peripheral realities and propose forms of intercultural, translocal mobility "without losing sight of the importance of localities in peoples' lives" (OAKES & SCHEIN, 2006, p. 1). Chapter 2 investigates how Racionais MC's, in the album *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* (1997), were able to express coalitional communicative gestures informed by both U.S. and Brazilian Black leaders, proposing translocal solidarity among different peripheral communities through an understanding of multiple, yet unified structures of racial oppression where hegemonic power resides, and its effects on social formation and education across Brazilian *periferias*.

In this sense, Rogério Silva (*A Periferia Pede Passagem: Trajetória Social e Intelectual de Mano Brown*, 2012) draws attention to Brazilian rap's potentiality as an alternative source of information and education, one that is—opposing the mass media—not oblivious to the violence and oppression affecting marginalized communities. He adds that Brazilian rap has been mixed with other genres aside from its 'original' counterpart, acquiring an aura of particularity. Brazilian rap music continues to be used as an instrument for the denunciation of violence and discrimination suffered by Blacks, mestiço/as, and poor youth from the periphery, and an important channel of communication with the rest of society (SILVA, 2012, p. 80). The Brazilian rap manifesto is, however, not alone in circumscribing, from the domains of music, the entrance into a dialectic of reaction to and rupture with the morbid fabricated relationships between self and other as stemming from Brazil's problematic, modern/colonial socialization processes.

1.7 Bloody Roots, Bloody Routes: Enter Heavy Metal

The persistent legacies of colonialism and Modernity in Brazil have culminated in ongoing, wide-spread depreciation and marginalization of Native cultures, knowledge, languages, and traditions, and in the increased exploitation of the surviving communities of resistance that keep them alive. The formation of a national modern state, especially in the early to mid-20th Century, foregrounded 'mestiçagem' as its key national project. As previously discussed, Gilberto Freyre's premises appeared to be aimed at overcoming racist views from the previous century that still plagued Brazilian society, and focused on a single identity for idealizing modern Brazil (the mestiço/a or *mulatto/a*). This assumption imbued the project with an aura of positivity, as a solution for freeing Blacks and mulatto/as from their cultural, economic and social dislocation both in time and space, a chronic 'belatedness', and for finally enabling their social ascension. We have seen how the seeking of such status of nationality, in denying the dynamics of racial segregation across Brazil, ended up reinforcing it: mestiçagem was ultimately a project of whitewashing that erased the Black and the Indigenous. Contemporary fabrications of the idea of racial democracy have likewise depended on the general neglect and erasure of different, yet similar processes of marginalization that racialized populations have systematically undergone.

From this context, there have surfaced in Brazil a myriad of ideological and political mechanisms that guarantee the continued oppression of marginalized groups. From the systemic discrimination affecting Black and Indigenous populations, to the xenophobia and displacement suffered by Northeastern migrants, as well as the brutal sexual and gender-based violence that has been wide-spread in Brazil, a bloody picture of Coloniality is being painted daily, exposing the disaster of the modern project. There are several similar pictures being painted across the Global South.

In *Heavy Metal Music in Latin America: Perspectives from the Distorted South*, Nelson Varas-Díaz and his colleagues approach metal music as a lens into these scenarios of oppression, bringing forth its powerful (re)articulations of identity, culture, and locality and the denouncing of the dire, ongoing consequences of failed modern agendas, as well as the novel operations of exploitation linked to 15th Century colonialism:

> If metal music in the Global North is seen as a reaction to the dead-end dreams of the modern project (Wallach, Berger and Greene 2012), then metal in the Global South expands this initial reaction to, in great measure, account for the colonial project which facilitated that modernity, and the consequences of that failed modern agenda of progress. Metal musicians throughout Latin America have shown a keen awareness of coloniality and its presence […], conscious of the context in which they make music, and how it becomes a reflection of said context. (VARAS-DÍAZ *et al*, 2020, p. 12).

Both musically and lyrically, heavy metal forms have been nurtured by a countercultural expression of these violent modern/colonial contexts, potentially resignifying local cultures and promoting social activism with the goal to better make sense of and resist the effects of centuries of imperialist exploitation and ongoing colonial violence undergone in the Global South. These musicians often expose how histories of colonial imposition and bloodshed have taken their toll on the contemporary cultural, political and economic conjunctures of their locations according to specific geopolitics.

On a similar vein, in "Heavy metal as controversy and counterculture", Keith Kahn-Harris, Titus Hjelm and Mark LeVine shed light on potential transgressive, countercultural elements of heavy metal music, related to gender, ethnicity, class, religion, politics, and the music industry as a whole, providing a recollection of controversial moments and names in Metal's history. They argue that despite varied topics and preoccupations tackled in different subgenres, "metal tends to be dominated by a distinctive commitment to 'transgressive' themes. By transgression we mean the practice of boundary crossing, symbolically and/or practically, […] of questioning and breaking taboos, [and] questioning established values" (KAHN-HARRIS *et al*., 2012, p. 14).

Metal's (re)forging of place and cultural identity has manifested itself differently across the Global South, giving rise to markedly local scenes and subcultures, which nonetheless have crystalized through intricate dynamics of translocality, musical borrowings, as well as economic and sociocultural networks. In "'Roots'?: The relationship between the global and the local within the Extreme Metal scene", Harris highlights the case of Brazil's biggest Metal exponent, and submits that

> scenes are 'territorializing machines' that produce particular kinds of relationships to geographic location. Sepultura's location in their early career was productive of and produced by a certain kind of relationship between global and local scenes. Both scenes were 'quasi-autonomous' from each other in that they were dependant on each other, yet contained practices, texts, institutions and forms of capital that were unique to each. This meant that Sepultura interacted simultaneously within the Brazilian scene and the global scene. (KAHN-HARRIS *et al.*, 2000, p. 17).

As an example of Brazilian Metal's musical treatment of local cultures, the creative appropriation embodied by Arandu Arakuaa, as previously mentioned, presents a musical, linguistic and visual hybridity that is recurrent in the sub-genre known as folk metal, in which artists engage with the incorporation of folkloric elements in their style, performance, and lyrical content, creating "new hybrid metal styles through an encounter with 'local' musics" (KAHN-HARRIS *et al.*, 2012, p. 14). Due to their peculiar musico-aesthetic configuration, and in being a metal band whose creator and main songwriter Zândhio Huku is Indigenous of the Krahô-Kanela ethnicity from his father's side, raised in central Tocantins in close contact with surrounding Xerente and Krahô communities, Arandu Arakuaa's metal music has been crucially informed by Indigenous cultures, episteme, and musical apparatuses, creating their own hybrid dynamics with the Metal component. Moreover, the band's visual aesthetics manifests a conscious reference to different Indigenous communities through the consistent usage of specific Native body painting.

There comes to the fore the identification of a boundary crossing not only in terms of the band's counter and transcultural manifestations in opposition to dominant practices and discourses (Arandu Arakuaa has engaged in on and off-stage activism aimed at Indigenous political agenda), but also in terms of boundaries in the heavy metal genre itself. As the band's mastermind Zândhio Huku discusses in an interview to BBC Brasil,

> O forte da nossa vocalista é o gutural, uma técnica agressiva incomum para mulheres. Eu canto como um pajé, com voz mais rouca, e ainda temos um baterista negro. Além de mim, que nasci no Norte e sou descendente de índios, temos integrantes filhos de nordestinos. Tudo isso gera uma série de questionamentos por fugir do padrão do branquelo cabeludo. Mas é uma via de mão dupla porque ao mesmo tempo em que as pessoas vão achar original, por outro há pessoas muito conservadoras ou que não têm ouvido musical para isso. Já os produtores ainda são muito conservadores e medrosos. Eles têm medo de contratar a banda e o público não ir, mas é o contrário. (HUKU, 2016).

Moreover, it is relevant to mention that Arandu Arakuaa has been a female-fronted band from its outset and throughout its different line-ups. Since 2011, the band has had four different singers: Nájila Cristina (from 2011 to 2016), Karine Aguiar (2017), Lis Carvalho (2018), and the group has recently announced Andressa Barbosa as the new lead singer (in addition to her former role as a bass player and backing singer). This aspect of Arandu Arakuaa's formation also constitutes a break with a long tradition of male dominated metal music.

In terms of the discursive elements that permeate the lyrical content of Arandu Arakuaa, an educational and ecological discussion of the album *Kó Yby Oré* (2013) is put forward by Rodrigo Barchi in *Poder e Resistência nos Diálogos das Ecologias Licantrópicas, Infernais e Ruidosas com as Educações Menores e Inversas (e Vice-Versa)* (2016). Barchi focuses on two songs from the record in terms of their potentiality to make the education-ecology relation both *inverted* (in the nietzschean-deleuzian sense) and *minor* (as a subversive condition of quotidian thought and praxis). The lycanthropy, infernality and noisiness mentioned in the title of Barchi's investigation refer precisely to the sonic and discursive power that (anti)musical and subcultural movements such as Extreme Metal bear to interfere with and displace major, institutionalized and normative schemes in environmental education. As he argues,

> No que diz respeito a uma perspectiva menor e inversa de ecologia, posso destacar aqui duas composições. A primeira traz o discurso de um guerreiro indígena, que lamenta a destruição de sua aldeia, família, terras e qualquer possibilidade de sobrevivência devido às guerras promovidas contra os brancos. A perda da comunidade, da terra, as quais representam, de acordo com o próprio discurso do índio da composição, a perda da própria identidade, do sentido da sobrevivência, do sentido de mundo. (BARCHI, 2016, p. 287-8).

Namely, Arandu Aarakuaa's "A-î-kuab r-asy", mentioned earlier in this chapter, invokes Indigenous episteme related to the dispossession of land by tackling the colonial invasion of Brazil by the Portuguese in 1500, and brings into the fold the resulting colonial violence and massive land exploitation that followed the colonial encounter. This is a central issue (explored in Chapter 3) in the conjunctures—past and present—of Indigenous communities in Brazil. Consideration should be made for the fact that land bears far more than territorial value for these communities, as their land-dwelling imminently and directly affects their survival, livelihood and well-being. This epistemic perspective is narrativized throughout "A-î-kuab r-asy", and brings the key issue of land appropriation to the fore, bearing decolonial potentiality.

Barchi also mentions the composition "Kaapora":

> A segunda que destaco é a homenagem a um diabo menor (MAGALHÃES, 1947), chamado 'Kaapora'. Responsável por fazer se perder na mata e apavorar os homens responsáveis por matar onças, antas, capivaras, emas e cutias, e temido pelos índios, o caapora [...] é de um índio de corpo peludo, com a cabeça virada para trás, e que vaga pela floresta montado em um porco do mato ou cateto. Seu diabolismo se dá por causa do terror que causa aos caçadores e visitantes da floresta, mas que é motivado por sua proteção aos seres da floresta. (BARCHI, 2016, p. 288).

The song "Kaapora"[11] addresses the Tupi-Guarani mythological deity whose name translates as 'dweller of the woods', often portrayed as a naked and agile Indigenous man or woman who carries a spear and rides on the back of a boar. The relationship between humankind and nature is represented by the feral being, who, in spite of its shocking appearance, is a guardian of the forests, regent of the animals, and pursuer of the hunters who violate Indigenous territories. The shape-shifting 'monstrosity' of Kaapora is arguably analogous to Arandu Arakuaa's music itself, as its aggressive, distorted riffs and powerful drumming (musical signatures of the heavy metal genre) are mixed with folk instruments of Brazilian regional and Indigenous musical traditions, giving form to hybrid songs that convey statements of dignity and respect to different Indigenous groups.

Such incorporation of folk instruments, tunes and themes into the traditional heavy metal style, the discursive affiliation with a particular culture, and the use of traditional symbols and clothing constitute what came to be known, in the 1990s, as Folk Metal. In Peter Marjenin's work, entitled *The Metal Folk: The Impact of Music and Culture on Folk Metal and the Music of Korpiklaani*, the author explains that the folk metal subgenre tends to be "folkloric and nationalistic and consciously evoke a culture, group of people, geographical location, time period in history or a mythological/cosmological story, [approaching] historically oppressed groups [and advocating] methods of subsistence and survival" (MARJENIN, 2014, p. 55). Lyrical content, language, aesthetics, and the use of folk instruments are, then, crucial aspects of the construction of a folk metal identity. The author explains that, in spite of the predominant use of the English language in folk metal (and heavy metal in general), some artists choose to sing strictly in their native tongue. On the one hand, this choice potentially renders the music less accessible to audiences worldwide, reducing market range; on the other hand, in using their native languages (or those of Indigenous groups) a folk metal output attempts to represent a cultural identity or even convey native episteme more honestly and carefully. Arandu Arakuaa's lyrical content is predominantly sung in Tupi, Xerente and Xavante, addressing rituals, mythologies and sociocultural issues that figure in the contexts of Indigenous communities, denouncing rather than reinforcing nationalist paradigms, as also discussed in Chapter 3.

[11] "Abá o-îuká îagûara /Abá o-îuká tapi'ira /Abá o-îuká kapibara /Abá o-îuká o-moîar /Abá o-asem o-îabab /Abá o-îabab o- mosykyîé /Abá kaapora o-moîar /Abá kaapora a-î-mokanhem" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013). "Men who kill jaguars; Men who kill tapirs / Men who kill capybaras / Men who kill the trapped / Men scream and flee / Men flee, scared / Men - Kaapora traps them / Men - Kaapora makes them disappear" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013, my translation).

1.8 Towards Musical Translocality

An understanding of the translocal dynamics that prompted the development of hip hop and heavy metal scenes in the Global South is key for the analysis of musical appropriation effected in their boundary crossing. The concept of 'scene' in music (especially popular) is discussed by Andy Bennett and Richard Peterson in their introduction to *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal and Virtual* (2004). The authors approach local scenes as a "focused social activity that takes place in a delimited space [where] clusters of producers, musicians, and fans realize their common musical taste, collectively distinguishing themselves from others by using music and cultural signs appropriated from other places" (BENNET & PETERSON, 2004, p. 8). Local scenes, thus, are often understood and spoken of with a sense of commonality, as the various parts involved in their development belong in this or that "neck of the woods". Nevertheless, they also appropriate diverse musical and stylistic properties from different territories, near and afar. A network of shared affinities, capital exchange and musical borrowings across countries is more often than not involved in the development of (trans)local scenes. Regarding these exchanges, the authors submit that "self-conscious local music scenes that focus on a particular kind of music are in regular contact with similar local scenes in distant places. They interact with each other through the exchange of recordings, bands, fans, and fanzines. These we call translocal scenes" (2004, p. 8). In other words, music scenes are developed and reorganized through translocal connections, which also include dialogues within different places and platforms such as digital media and social networking. However, as further discussed, the line dividing a local scene from a translocal one may be more or less tenuous depending on the genre(s) of a given music scene, the stylistic innovations it incorporates, and the cultural boundaries that it crosses.

One crucial example of boundary crossing in music is the hybrid band Rage Against the Machine. Fusing the two main music scenes addressed in this investigation (hip hop and heavy metal), RATM stormed the mainstream scene of the 1990s United States. In *Empire Records: A Study of Resistance and the Politics of Cultural Production in the Network Age* (2010), Douglas Tewksbury describes the band's musical hybridity and their overall sound as "heavy-hitting, rooted in hip-hop culture, funk, heavy metal, and hard rock. Stylistically, the band held a groove in its bass and guitar lines, many parts of which were played in unison and at a syncopated rhythm over a steady drum beat and de la Rocha's caustic delivery"

(TEWKSBURY, 2010, p. 113-14). Yet, the band's innovativeness was not restricted to their musical hybridity, but also a result of a predominant sociopolitical engagement in their lyrics and activism.

In contrast with most contemporary popular music scenes in the United States (and also across the Global South, where popular musics have been in constant, translocal interplay with affinitive arts in the U.S., through a network of cultural and economic capital, stylistic and musical innovations), Rage Against the Machine put forth a predominantly political hybrid music, grounded on denunciations of modern/colonial violence. Phillip Serrato stresses that

> Mexican immigrants and the 'problems' they are popularly seen to embody had indeed been relegated to near invisibility during the 1999 millennium craze. Instead of the problem of a southern border too porous for Americans' comfort, weren't 'they' too busy talking about Y2K bugs, television coverage of festivities around the world, stockpiling food and water, and 'Greatest (whatever) of the Century/Millennium' lists? Wasn't the excitement over the millennium an opportunity for the 'problems' posed by migrating Mexicans (and others) to be unimportant for a little while? With the arrival of the year 2000, Americans for once fussed and fretted over a threat to the United States that came from within, not from south of the border. The nation's own electronic infrastructure threatened to implode and throw it into chaos. (SERRATO, 2004, p. 3).

Serrato also explains that Rage Against the Machine crucially deviated from the flow of widespread placelessness and timelessness of most popular music scenes in the 1990s in the United States, as these scenes reflected a time of sociohistorical obliviousness (discussed in Chapter 4) in which "xenophobic conversations about Mexicanos and immigration took hold again. Notably, these debates continue to linger into the present day (for instance, in arguments about the rights of undocumented immigrants)" (SERRATO, 2004, p. 16). Nevertheless, RATM were able to occupy the mainstream music industry and operate on a global level, influencing diverse local scenes, especially within and between heavy metal and hip hop, and were catalysts of what came to be called Nu Metal in the late 1990s.

In accordance with this translocal perspective, Donna Alexander argues that Rage Against the Machine "present complex transnational mappings of silent and silenced imperial history located within and beyond the national boundaries of the US" (ALEXANDER, 2012, p. 1). The author highlights the Chicano self-identification of lead singer Zack de La Rocha and illustrates how it is an important influence on their music in both form and style through the analysis of two song lyrics by RATM, namely "Sleep Now in the Fire" and "People of the Sun", which through the use of motifs (such as geographic displacement) and specific

techniques (such as the list poem and geopoetic imagery) constitute, according to Alexander, traveling poems stemming from transnational articulations.

She exemplifies this moving back and forth through space and time, within and outside the Americas, with lines from "Sleep Now in the Fire" ("I am the nina, the pinta, the santa maria / The noose and the rapist / And the field's overseer / The agents of orange / The priests of Hiroshima"), whose depiction of capitalist destruction and exploitation enables the song to

> take the reader on a transnational journey through history from the transatlantic voyage of the 15th century to the slave fields of America to the atrocities of Vietnam and Japan. The use of the word 'priest' again insinuates America's belief that its imperialist acts are guided by providence, a denial of the capitalist and globalization motivations involved in such acts. Then we return to the U.S. which tells us that this is 'the cost of my desire / sleep now in the fire' of the American Empire. Clearly, this list depicts a continent born and nurtured through the exploitation and destruction of land and people both inside and outside of the Americas. This list verse unites a global population of victims of corporate America. (ALEXANDER, 2012, p. 14).

However, it is important to mention that Alexander, in categorizing Rage Against the Machine's music as a collection of "traveling poems", focuses on the lyrics and, secondarily, on a video (directed by documentary filmmaker Michael Moore), and not on the music's aural, melodic apparatuses. Contrastingly, I aim at analyzing and theorizing the lyrical content of the bands that constitute the corpus of this investigation in conjunction with the music, accepting as a point of departure the notion that both apparatuses operate in a synergic relationship.

We will see, for instance, how the band's hybrid interplay manifests differently according to the narrativizaion of specific lyrical contents, reinforcing the musical treatment of identity, locality, and border crossing. This becomes a key endeavor in the band's identification of a Chicano voice with Native peoples, episteme, and comsmologies, often exposing the ongoing operations of Coloniality while simultaneously reaffirming the resisting presence of the Indigenous. In denouncing old and new forms of colonization, Rage Against the Machine question Euro-ethnocentric paradigms of progress and the colonial borders of the modern nation state. Analogously to Gloria Anzaldúa's border thinking, the music of Rage Against the Machine becomes illustrative of the condition of

> Living on borders and in margins, keeping intact one's shifting and multiple identity and integrity, is like trying to swim in a new element, an 'alien' element. There is an exhilaration in being a participant in the further evolution of humankind, in being "worked" on. I have the sense that certain 'faculties'—not just in me but in every border resident, colored or noncolored—and dormant areas of consciousness are being activated, awakened. Strange, huh? And yes, the 'alien' element has become familiar—never comfortable, not with society's clamor to uphold the old, to rejoin the flock, to go with the herd. No, not comfortable but home. (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. ix).

The following chapters will take us through a journey across the global and local dimensions of diaspora, and through the raging waters, the dark forests, and the unending fires of resistance that have marked distinct yet converging histories—many of which have been sung whether than written—of struggle in distant territories of the Global South. Hopefully, in doing so, they will take us home.

2. CHAPTER II –
BLACK POLITICAL CULTURE IN THE EMERGENCE OF HIP HOP AND THE MUSIC OF RACIONAIS MC'S

"O ser humano é descartável no Brasil
Como modess usado ou bombril
Cadeia guarda o que o sistema não quis
Esconde o que a novela não diz".

Mano Brown

2.1 Genesis – The Translocal Origins of Hip-Hop

This chapter addresses a journey in which mysterious vessels—that are both real and symbolic, guided by stars that may be long gone, but whose light still shines upon us after completing their own travels through the darkness of space and time—sail fast across the seas. The journey begins with a brief mapping of a constellation known as *rap*, which, for its part, emerged in a galaxy called *hip hop*. The treatment of music as a traveling entity plays a large part in the story told here, and, at least in this case, metaphorical constructs stem less from a poetic endeavor than from a need to find reference points. If one cannot see the stars, where does one go? In this journey, the vessels sail across the Black Atlantic, in the turbulent dispersion of diaspora.

The musical movements investigated in this chapter carry the potentiality to reshape our thinking of cultural history because they invite us to consider some of the key intercultural and translocal attributes of contemporary society. This is evident not only in terms of economic and social dynamics, artistic and cultural phenomena, and political landscapes, but also—and most importantly—in terms of the shared histories of oppression in different localities. Hereby I investigate the diasporic nature of hip hop, not only where the genre was first popularized (the United States of America), but also in Brazil, where it was appropriated, having key diverging features both in content and in form. I argue that hip hop, as an artistic movement, was hybrid, translocal and political from its outset. These three attributes are also explored in the following sections, with an approach that is simultaneously theoretical and analytical, bringing to the fore an understanding of Brazilian hip hop as a phenomenon that manifests itself today both as a form of street culture and a social

movement. Although the history of hip hop as a wider artistic movement begins in the late 1960s, it is part of a long trajectory dating back to the 17th Century, when the African-American work songs where sung by slaves under the barbaric rule of white supremacist terror.

My investigation of hip hop as an essentially diasporic art movement (both in the U.S. and in Brazil) is initially informed by the ideas and concepts put forth by the British historian Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993). In this sense, the musical travels I address here will at times operate as a metaphor for Black diaspora, in an understanding of specific sociogeographical and cultural categories as loci of continuous tension and negotiation. In a similar way, what Gilroy calls the Black Atlantic constitutes a locus that is both real and metaphorical: naturally, it refers to the ocean, but also to a complex "intercultural and transnational formation" (GILROY, 1993, p. ix). The author establishes a key chronotope:[12]

> The image of the ship—a living, micro-cultural, micro-political system in motion—[focuses] attention on the middle passage, on the various projects for redemptive return to an African homeland, on the circulation of ideas and activists as well as the movement of key cultural and political artefacts: tracts, books, gramophone records, and choirs. (GILROY, 1993, p. 4).

The importance of the aforementioned passage for my investigation of hip hop is threefold:

1) Gilroy's understanding of the ship as a living system in motion across the Black Atlantic—and more specifically, the spaces between Europe, Africa, and America (which I do not mistake for the United States)—is useful for my investigation of the diasporic cultural development of a different living system: an artistic movement known as hip hop, born from transnational interplays;

2) The idea of the ship as a micro-cultural system is Gilroy's starting point for addressing the intercultural formation of the Black Atlantic: artifacts that were set in motion in Black diaspora (tracts, books, gramophone records, and choirs) prompted cultural negotiations between the three continents. Similarly, the intercultural hybridity of rap music was (in its emergence) and continues to be, as discussed further, the result of musical

[12] "A unit of analysis for studying texts according to the ratio and nature of the temporal and spatial categories represented. The chronotope is an optic for reading texts as x-rays of the forces at work in the culture system from which they spring" (BAKHTIN, 1981, p. 426).

borrowings between different regions in socioeconomic struggle, and of the resignification of specific technologies;

3) The micro-political system of the ship in the Black Atlantic focuses attention on the terror of racial slavery and the resulting economic and social trade-offs that came to constitute Western civilization as we know it; that is to say, the histories of violence (material, cultural and epistemic) initiated in the Middle Passage resonates throughout Modernity. As we will see, rap music in general has not been oblivious to the ways in which this context has impacted marginalized sociogeographical spaces today. Rap's denunciation of racial inequities, prejudice and violence as stemming from a long history of segregation and oppressive myths is not an anachronistic exercise, but a forthright treatment of the real.

2.2 Pre-hip hop: Afro-Caribbean and African-American musical catalysts

The emergence of hip hop as an art movement followed an extensive history of Black Atlantic creativity. It resulted mainly from translocal cultural negotiations between Caribbean Americans, African Americans, and Latino Americans. A chronological mapping of the movement's development would perhaps not be the ideal way to approach it here, Instead, let us begin with the key technology that prompted the birth of hip hop as we know it today.

The Jamaican cultural landscape in the 1950s was marked by the advent of the sound system, and U.S. Rhythm & Blues[13] was extremely popular in the capital Kingston at the time. There were two main reasons for such popularity, and one of them was an increase in the number of radios during and after World War II, when people would listen to military broadcasts and imported records of Southern U.S. music in the bigger Jamaican cities. The second refers to Jamaica's urbanization process in the 1940s, which led to an intense migration of country people towards the cosmopolitanism of those cities, already widely exposed to U.S. R&B music. The first sound systems comprised of generators, turntables and piles of speakers that were transported with the use of trucks and installed by DJs (disc jockeys), bouncers and engineers. Addressing the Caribbean origins of rap, Henry Rhodes explains that there was "great demand for the R&B type of music, but unfortunately there were no local Jamaican bands which could play this type of music as well as the black

[13] Rhythm & Blues, also known simply as R&B, is a music genre created by African-American communities in the United States in the early 1940s. It was heavily influenced by other genres such as Jazz and Blues, but with a prominence of heavy and repetitive beats.

American artists. […] large mobile discotheques were set up to meet this need" (RHODES, 1993, p. 5). Despite the lack of documented material informing exactly what songs were being played in the first sound systems, it is safe to assume that popular artists such as Louis Jordan, Paul "Hucklebuck" Williams, Fats Domino, Amos Melburn, and Roy Brown were included in the selections made by DJs, because these artists figured prominently in R&B charts of the time.

In 1950s Jamaica, although sound systems played mostly U.S. based Rhythm & Blues, local musics gradually took over. One important example was the hybrid emergence of ska, from the combination of U.S. R&B/jazz music with Afro-Caribbean styles, namely calypso and mento. The histories of both styles are conflated in terms of aesthetic development and political engagement, and they play a large part in the unfolding of Black Atlantic musical creativity. Calypso originated from a transnational interplay between West African rhythms and French creole singing, in a context of sociopolitical upheaval in Trinidad and Tobago during the early 19th Century. As Jocelyne Guilbault highlights:

> Emerging from slavery, Emancipation, and the post-colonial period, the role of calypso has been described by Caribbean and non-Caribbean writers as a means to rebel, condemn, resist, attract, divide, unite and also deeply enjoy. In all cases, calypso's socio-political commentaries and humorous songs have been interpreted as resulting from the artists' focus on critical consciousness, honor, reputation, and prestige - values nurtured by the colonial and post-colonial regimes and conveniently placed above economic interests and gains in the name of culture. (GUILBAULT, 2002, p. 191).

Even though by the early 20th Century calypso music had spread across the Caribbean Antilles and the north coast of South America, the aforementioned transnational interplay, which prompted the style's hybrid emergence, was by no means free of tension. Guilbault puts forth that "in an attempt to get rid of French Creole (which was perceived as a primitive language), business people required the use of English in their advertisements, and judges in competitions clearly favored those calypsonians who used English lyrics" (2002, p. 194). The calypso music business and the institutionalization of the genre as a profitable commodity also impacted on gender roles: women, who had prominent positions in the musical scene and "in the forefront as chantwel (song-leaders) were discouraged from singing their bawdy songs and performing explicit sexual behavior in public. This obsession with respectability […] led women nearly to disappear from the calypso scene for several decades" (2002, p. 194). Calypso music became popular in Trinidad and Tobago in the 1930s, with prominent recording artists such as Lord Invader and Lord Kitchener.

Figuring in the Jamaican musical landscape in the late 19th Century, mento music, in its stylistic conflation with calypso, was one of the key influences for the emergence of ska and the resulting prominence of the Jamaican sound systems. As a predominantly folk music, it is marked by the usage of percussion instruments such as the hand drums and the rhumba box, wind instruments like the home-made saxophone, clarinet and flute made from bamboo, and string instruments that include the acoustic guitar and the banjo. Michael Garnice explains that even though mento has African and European roots, by the early 1950s the style had also "encompassed pan-Caribbean influences, as well as from American jazz. Although it was informed by a world of music, [as] Jamaica's original music, all other Jamaican music can trace its roots to mento" (GARNICE, 2018). Thus, the history of mento music, like calypso (its sister-music from Trinidad and Tobago), is illustrative of the development of Black Atlantic music and its inherently translocal attribute. Not only did both genres stem from West African, Caribbean, and Latin rhythms, but they also shared common characteristics in terms of lyrical content, namely through political innuendos (with topics of protest and social commentary) and sexual double entendres, Famous Jamaican mento artists from the 1950s include Lord Flea, Louise Bennett and Count Lasher.

As previously mentioned, from the fusion of these two Caribbean music styles and U.S. Rhythm & Blues, ska was born. In spite of their origins in different localities (mento from Jamaica, calypso from Trinidad and Tobago, and R&B from the United States), the prominence of the sound systems in Jamaica in the 1950s, alongside the expansion of the national recording industry, facilitated various translocal musical negotiations. Moreover, there were shared stylistic attributes between these music genres. For instance, ska is marked by a strong emphasis on the afterbeat,[14] and as the precursor to other popular Jamaican styles such as rocksteady and reggae, this characteristic was also incorporated by them. As Paul Kauppila argues, however, "audible evidence demonstrates clearly that the emphasis on the afterbeat was often present within American R&B as well. Early recordings […] all contain the seeds of the 'behind-the-beat' feel of ska and reggae" (KAUPPILA, 2006, p. 77). He also explains that the music of United Statesian R&B artists such as Fats Domino, Barbie Gaye, Cookie and the Cupcakes, and Rosco Gordon all share these common rhythmic elements focused on the afterbeat, although it is unlikely that the first R&B recordings were inspired by Jamaican music such as mento.

[14] Afterbeat is a musical term that essentially refers to a percussion style with emphasis on secondary, weaker beats in a 4/4 measure (usually the second and fourth beats of the bar), following the main beat (known as downbeat, or the first beat of a measure).

As people migrate, so does music. The emergence of ska in the late 1950s was not only the result of musical negotiations, but it also stemmed from specific socio-economic processes taking place simultaneously both in the U.S. and Jamaica. Kaupilla explains that in the U.S., “immigration restrictions were relaxed during World War II because of labour shortages. Many Jamaicans were admitted to the US on short-term agricultural contracts [where] they attended African American dance parties featuring recorded music” (2006, p. 79). These immigrant workers would purchase records and audio equipment during their stay in the United States and bring them back (once their work contracts had expired) to Jamaica. While in their homeland, these groups of enthusiasts, musicians, and working people tranformed trucks into mobile discotheques, transporting diverse audio equipment; this was part of the process of learning and implementing innovative techniques that were pivotal for the crystallization of ska and the increased popularization of the then-new sounds of U.S. rhythm & blues. As mentioned previously, imported equipment such as turntables and speakers, transported and installed by DJs, bouncers, engineers and roadies using trucks, constituted the first sound systems in Jamaica.

This new musical technology was important and necessary for producers and the public alike. The sound systems, with the usage of playbacks, made up for the scarcity of established local artists. This, in turn, facilitated the organization of musical events because sound systems reduced the costs and manpower involved in the logistics of handling multiple instruments (for instance, diverse wind, string, and percussion instruments could be emulated through the sound systems). Most importantly, low-income people were able to enjoy these affordable, outdoor musical events, as they “starved for entertainment and most of them could not afford the price of a home record playback system, which amounted to approximately a year’s wages for the average Jamaican” (WITMER, 1987, p. 15, apud KAUPPILA, 2006, p. 79). These musical events, carried out in large open areas, grew in quantity and quality, and were financially viable since the public would also consume diverse types of beverages and foods, which accounted for most of the profit. Such conditions highlight the formation of a synergy involving socio-economic, geographical and cultural elements that made the Jamaican sound systems a phenomenon throughout the decades. Although the emphasis was originally on U.S. Rhythm & Blues music, Jamaican artists such as Arthur “Duke” Reid, Clement “Coxsone” Dodd, Prince Buster and Stranger Cole soon transited towards making original music.

2.3 Hip Hop Culture and its Travels

With the advent of the sound systems and the resulting increased popularity of ska in Jamaica, local musics gradually thrived, and with them, new practices and techniques that would eventually prompt and inspire the creation of new musical styles in the United States (the very place from where the aforementioned core technologies had been imported). From this complex back-and-forth process of musical negotiations between different localities, hip hop emerged. As Paul Gilroy argues in *The Black Atlantic*,

> hip hop culture grew out of the crossfertilisation of *African-American* vernacular cultures with their *Caribbean* equivalents rather than springing fully formed from the entrails of the blues. The immediate catalyst for its development was the relocation of Clive "Kool DJ Herc" Campbell from Kingston to 168th Street in the Bronx. (GILROY, 1993, p. 103, emphasis added).

Before delving into what defines hip hop in a general sense, it is important to bring attention to the translocal and intercultural conditions, mentioned by Gilroy, which prompted its emergence as an art movement growing out of Black cultural traditions developed in different regions in the American continent. As we have seen so far in this chapter, diasporic musical forms were already manifested in the African-American (namely blues, jazz, and Rhyhtm & Blues) and Caribbean (mento, calypso and ska) cultural landscapes of the 19th and early 20th centuries. On the whole, West African, Caribbean, and Latin rhythms were the basis for much of the popular musics of the time, as indicators of what Gilroy calls "Black Atlantic creativity" (1993, p. 16). Born out of a long history of slavery, racial terror, limited emancipation, and socioeconomic struggle, these musics are simultaneously constitutive of and informed by Black diaspora. From the Middle Passage to Modernity, musical genres emerging from Black cultural traditions have become markedly representational, which is to say that through both form (stylistic hybridity and appropriations) and content (sociopolitical commentary), these musics provide a lens for better understanding a history of shared tensions across different localities, as well as for addressing some of the major problems in contemporary society.

Gilroy, in the aforementioned passage, mentions the Jamaican DJ Kool Herc (Clive Campbell, born April 16, 1955), as the major catalyst for the development of hip hop. His family immigrated to the U.S. when he was twelve years old, in the beginning of Jamaica's post-independence era. The period was marked by successive conservative Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) governments and a steady economic growth, although not shared by most Afro-

Jamaican people. The capital Kingston, where Kool Herc was born, was a symbol of this inequality: the majority of the urban poor lacked dignified jobs and housing, educational provision, and where exposed to—or even turned to—crime. It was only later, under Michael Manley's government[15] (elected in 1972), that Jamaica would see social and land reforms, as well as important legislations on union and women's rights. Thus, when Kool Herc's family realocated from Kingston to the Bronx, they were escaping widespread socioeconomic inequity and looking for better life conditions.

Kool Herc spent most of his childhood years in Trenchtown, a low-income community in Kingston that became famous throughout the 1950s and 1960s for producing some of Jamaica's top musical talents, such as Bob Marley, Bunny Wailer, Peter Tosh, and Alton Ellis; hence, the DJ was, from an early age, exposed to the influence of the Jamaican sound systems. As ethnomusicologist Wayne Marshall explains, the sound system dances informed Herc's "sense of the power of music and of the DJ in particular, his sense of what was cool (e.g., suavely-dressed, well-respected gangsters and rebellious, ratchet-knife-wielding rude boys), as much as that may have had to be recalibrated upon moving to the Bronx" (2007, p. 3).[16] In 1950s Jamaica, as previously discussed, although most of the music emanating from the sound systems in the dance halls was foreign (e.g. U.S. Rhythm & Blues and soul music), Kool Herc witnessed, from an early age, the development of local musical scenes including ska, reggae, and rocksteady—styles that, for their part, became influential in the U.S. and beyond. This period of tranloscal musical exchanges highlight what Marshall calls a "Jamaican synthesis of foreign and familiar styles. […] the sounds of black America never totally fell out of favor in the dance halls, though foreign-produced records no longer constituted the bulk of the sound system repertory as they had in the 1950s" (2007, p. 3).

The Jamaican sound system dances paved the way for the emergence of hip hop in the Bronx, not only in terms of the technologies being used, but also—and perhaps most importantly—the goings on at the musical events. Naturally, the role of DJs was fundamental: they were the life of the party in the sound system halls. Coxsone Dodd and Duke Reid were important names for the development and widespread implementation of the Jamaican sound systems, at first organizing dances, parties, and shows, and later by producing records in their own studios and labels with an ever-increasing audience, both in and out of Jamaica. It was in

[15] For more information, see: https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100131647
[16] MARSHALL, Wayne. Kool Herc. *In*: HESS, Mickey. *Icons of Hip Hop: An Encyclopedia of the Movement, Music, and Culture*. Greenwood, 2007.

Dodd's iconic *Sir Coxsone's Downbeat* sound system in 1956 that pioneer Winston Sparkes (stage name King Stitt) first started deejaying. As Marshall explains, Dodd hired King Stitt "to talk over the records, shouting out friends and associates, bigging up the sound system itself, and exhorting the audience to dance and buy food and drinks, [and] Stitt sounded a lot like Herc and his partner (and fellow Jamaican immigrant) Coke La Rock would later sound" (MASHALL, 2007, p. 4). Although this role may seem casual or merely complementary, it actually involved a myriad of musical negotiations and practices: the DJ was also a special kind of vocalist, and an important catalyst for the manifestation of translocality involved in the emergence of hip hop. What had begun with simple, short phrases (shout outs, punctual commentary, and words of extortion and cheering up to the audience) would turn into a complex scheme of rhyming, jive-talking, and creative routines, all informed by an intercultural musical identity in the interplay between U.S. and Jamaican music. It is important to note that this act of chatting/chanting over a beat had its roots in the aforementioned, traditional Afro-Caribbean styles of calypso and mento, and was known as *toasting*. In other words, the musical practice which defines deejaying was crucially informed by the West-African, oral traditions of the griots,[17] as incorporated in the intercultural landscapes of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Toasting is, thus, a marker of Black Atlantic creativity, and it is also the root of U.S. hip hop *rappin*g as we know it today. Marshall, in addressing the musical practice of pioneer DJ King Stitt in Jamaica, as well as DJ Kool Herc in the U.S., provides insight into the translocal attribute which came to define hip hop in its early stages:

> Stitt's designation as a DJ, though—and the continued use of the term DJ to describe a nonsinging vocalist in Jamaica—makes an important connection between Jamaican sound system practice, early hip hop performance, and the main influence that both forms share: African American radio disc jockeys and their jive-talking, rhymeslinging, rhythm-rolling style. Having for years tuned into American radio broadcasts that could reach Jamaica from as far north as Memphis or Cincinnati, the earliest Jamaican DJs borrowed liberally from the smooth signatures, scat singing, and catchy cadences of radio legends such as New Orleans-based Vernon "Dr. Daddy-O" Winslow […]. Herc and Coke La Rock would later synthesize what they had absorbed from these Jamaican versions of African American disc jockey performance with the New York–based descendents of the same models, including such white disc jocks as Wolfman Jack and Cousin Brucie, both of whom Herc cites

[17] The griot is the West-African equivalent of a bard, that is, a person who is responsible for the preservation and development of oral traditions through storytelling and/or singing. In a sense, the griot is something between a poet, a historian, and a musician, or all at once. "While remaining true to this spirit, Calypso –like other forms of music—continued to evolve through the '50's and '60's. When rock-steady and reggae bands looked to make their music a form of national and even international Black resistance, they took Calypso's example. Calypso itself, like Jamaican music, moved back and forth between the predominance of boasting and toasting songs packed with 'slackness' and sexual innuendo and a more topical, political, 'conscious' style" (more information in 'ROOTS 'n' RAP' available at: https://w3.ric.edu/faculty/rpotter/calypso.html).

> as early influences on both his talkover style and his American accent. (MARSHALL, 2007, p. 4).

Thus, when Kool Herc immigrated to New York in 1967, he was already familiar with United Statesian music such as Rhythm & Blues thanks to the prominence of the sound systems in Jamaica, and he had also been exposed to soul music at home, since his parents owned several records, including music by James Brown and Nina Simone. In addition, the young migrant was informed by an array of Jamaican versions of U.S. music, as well as local styles (namely ska) that had become popular in his hometown. Finally, the musical performances of pioneering DJs in Jamaica and in the U.S. would deeply influence his own sound and the early stages of hip hop.

Once settled in the Bronx, Kool Herc would face the social tension of racial prejudice and xenophobia (even among African-American peers), deemed an outsider because of his Jamaicanness, identified as such mainly through his accent and clothing style. As Marshall argues, "being Jamaican in the Bronx during the 1970s carried such a stigma that some young immigrants found it better to conceal their backgrounds. Not only would Clive have to lose his accent to fit in among his new peers, he would have to lose his 'hick' clothing as well" (2007, p. 5). Naturally, music would play a large role in the matter of social stigmas as well: after Bob Marley became famous in the United States in the 1970s, one's Jamaicanness became less of a reason for violent social stigmatization, and more fashionable, "cool", and quasi-exotic.

When the young Jamaican migrant deejayed in his first party (a fund-raiser for his sister Cindy Campbell, held in 1973), he had already become deeply familiarized with the preferences of the audiences from the Bronx, being an avid attendee and observer of musical events in New York since his arrival in the late 1960s. Herc's selection was emblematic of his varied musical background, incorporating not only soul and funk hits of the time, popular Latin-tinged breaks, but also the big tunes from the reggae craze in Kingston. As Marshall puts forward, staying true to his roots in his deejaying debut was a bold move by Herc, since "Jamaican music was still shunned as too 'country' or degraded as 'jungle music' by many African Americans, a good number of whom, as first-or second-generation rural migrants from the South, still sought to distance themselves from a 'hick' past" (MARSHALL, 2007, p. 6). The intricate process of translocality involved in the development of popular Jamaican styles (ska, reggae, and rocksteady) as stemming from an array of musical negotiations with African-American musics made in the U.S. (R&B, soul, and funk), discussed earlier in this

section, was clearly reflected in Kool Herc's selections. The very techniques developed by the DJ and demonstrated in his debut party were also emblematic of U.S.-Jamaica translocality: Herc "adapted Jamaican sound system techniques for his funk-oriented audience, shouting out and bigging up the crowd in local slang over the records people wanted to hear. The strategy worked: The room filled with young dancers and a feeling of exuberance" (MARSHALL, 2007, p. 6).

Kool Herc's innovative and powerful sound system, his outstanding style, and his intercultural musical selections became increasingly more popular, and by 1975 the demand for his parties had reached across many areas in New York City. Moreover, the father of hip hop played an important role in reshaping the sociocultural landscapes in the Bronx, where gang violence was still widespread. Most of his audience consisted of Bronx youth who craved space and opportunity for recreation, as well as an escape from the danger, toxicity, and lack of perspective that prevailed in that environment. Herc's sound system craze in the Bronx would become a catalyst for social change. Marshall explains that "as style wars increasingly supplanted gang wars among Bronx youth, Herc's parties seemed to herald a cultural sea change for the borough", highlighting the sociopolitical impact of hip hop culture from its early stages.

There was a connection between this sociopolitical drive and Herc's record selection: he was definitely not a campaigner for the mainstream, and tended to ignore the commercial music being played in most radios and clubs in late 1970s NYC, such as disco and pop. Instead, the audacious DJ favored the obscure, acid funk that shaped the sonic background of life in the Bronx, life that was marked by inequality and hardship. Herc's record selections echoed the famed scream of James Brown ("say it out loud, I'm black and proud"), the pioneer who re(de)fined the co-opted, commercially assimilated R&B and soul music of the time into the powerful, asserting sonic force called funk. In other words, as Marshall argues, "the music Herc and his peers wanted to hear was the music of Black Power, of militant pride, and of continued calls for social and economic justice in the post-Civil Rights era,[…] not the songs one typically heard at that time on the radio, even on 'black radio'" (2007, p. 9). And it was from funk music, with its characteristic percussion-heavy, rhythm-centric passages, that came the beats for the foundation of hip hop. Herc isolated the break beats off the tracks, selecting them from the records with the sole purpose of generating the breaks that people wanted to hear in the parties. This method of selecting and repeating breaks is what Marshall considers Hercs's "major aesthetic innovation, [his] 'breaks records' not only came to

constitute what is essentially a *b-boy canon*, they also established the foundational repertory of the hip hop DJ" (2007, p. 10, emphasis added), highlighting the importance of breakdancing and the role that b-boys and b-girls, as we will see below, played in the development of hip hop culture.

So far, we have looked at the translocal origins of hip hop music, that is, an intercultural style that emerged in the United States as stemming from Afro-Caribbean roots. The notion of translocality that I am bringing to the fore is at once geographical and cultural. It is geographical in the sense that it involves relocation of people (workers, migrants, artists and enthusiasts) and artifacts (musical records and technologies) across physical borders; and it is also cultural, as it stems from negotiations between different traditions of Black Atlantic creativity from the Middle Passage. Hence, with this supra-geographical, intercultural translocality in mind, it would be false to assume that hip hop culture, in its origins, is exclusively United Statesian.

Although the cross-fertilization of U.S. and Afro-Caribbean musics discussed throughout this section serves to illustrate this translocal attribute, it does not provide us with the whole picture; after all, hip hop breaks where primarily meant for moving and dancing. Paul Gilroy, in addressing DJ Kool Herc's relocation from Jamaica to the Bronx and the intercultural development of hip hop in his parties, explains that

> The syncretic dynamics of the form were complicated further by a distinctly Hispanic input into and appropriation of the break dance moves which helped to define the style in its early stages. But hip hop was not just the product of these different, though converging, black cultural traditions. The centrality of "the break" within it, and the subsequent refinement of cutting and mixing techniques through digital sampling which took the form far beyond the competence of hands on turntables, mean that the aesthetic rules which govern it are premised on a dialectic of rescuing appropriation and recombination which creates special pleasures and is not limited to the technological complex in which it originated. (GILROY, 1993, p. 103).

When Gilroy mentions the Hispanic input into break dance, he is drawing attention to the role of Puerto Rican—along with African American—youth in the development of the style. The history of break dancing dates back to 1929, the social period of the Great Depression, when many among these youth of dancers lost their jobs in the clubs and thus held their performances in the streets, which is why break dancing also became known as street dance. From its outset, the style involved complex, strange, and shocking moves (based on gymnastics and martial arts) that were emblematic of the general feeling of despair during the crisis. Later on, in the mid-1950s, break dancing also drew influence from and became

representative of the dissatisfaction with the Vietnam War. As Elaine Andrade explains, certain break movements constitute a reflection of the American soldier's debilitate body, while others make allusion to vehicles, weapons and gears of war, such as the famed *head spin*, a move that represents the helicopters used by the U.S. army in Vietnam (ANDRADE, 1996, apud ROCHA *et al*. 2001, p. 47), The development of break dancing is, thus, another marker of translocal engagement between Latin Americans and African-Americans, as an artistic style that incorporates socio-politically informed, anti-war protests—politics and aesthetics have oftentimes operated mutually in break dancing from its outset. These markers of protest, manifested through the intricate dance moves of b-boys and b-girls, were also responsible for the centrality of break dancing within hip hop culture in its formative years, the 1970s.

The development of hip hop then and now brings to the fore a translocal and intercultural dynamics which Gilroy calls a "dialectic of rescuing appropriation and recombination" (GILROY, 1993, p. 103). This development was, at first, carried out by DJs and break dancers. The powerful synergy between the two—that is, between sound and movement—became increasingly more complex. As previously discussed, pioneer DJ Kool Herc (who is credited for baptizing break dancers as b-boys and b-girls) came up with hip hop's foundational break beats, with record selections spamming from Jamaican ska/reggae and U.S. funk/soul, putting two copies of the same record on the deck and switching between them in a "Merry-Go-Round"[18] which defined early hip hop deejaying and gave rise to a whole new musical culture. His techniques and reinvention of the Jamaican sound system inspired other pioneers in the 1970s, such as Dj Afrika Bambaataa, who expanded the style in his street parties, and DJ Grandmaster Flash, inventor of the famed technique known as *scratching*, which consists of rubbing a vinyl record back and forth, producing distorted rhythmic sounds. They are among the forefathers of the "Art of Turntablism",[19] that is, the development of deejaying skills at high levels.

Besides these two founding elements (deejaying and breakdancing), hip hop culture was further enriched with the prominent figure of the MC, or Master of Ceremonies. As we

[18] "Herc came up with the technique of extending the break by playing two copies of the same record on dual turntables. As one record reached the end of the break, he cued the other record back to the beginning of the break, turning a snippet of a record into an extended loop. He initially called the technique "the Merry-Go-Round" (DJ Kool Herc [b. 1955]). Avaiable at: https://teachrock.org/people/dj-kool-herc. Accessed on: 10 jun. 2021.

[19] "The Art Of Turntablism". Avaiable at: https://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/feature/the-art-of-turntablism. Accessed on: 10 jun. 2021.

have seen, at DJ Kool Herc's parties in the 1970s, the role of the MC consisted of chatting and chanting over a break beat, as well as cheering up the crowd, enticing people onto the dance floor and calling attention to the main character, who was the DJ. In other words, the MC performed Afro-Caribbean *toasting* at the parties in NYC as a non-singing vocalist, with a supporting role in relation to the DJ. The routines, rhymeslinging, and jive-talking elaborated by the MCs grew in complexity, and they became prominent figures in the development of hip hop. As Mickey Hess explains, Coke La Rock and Busy Bee were big names in this early stage, and soon "the MC came into his own. Famous MC battles, such as the 1982 competition between Busy Bee and Kool Moe Dee, took rhyming to a new level as these MCs sought to win over the crowd with their rhyme structure, wordplay, and wit" (HESS, 2007, p. xiii). That was the crystallization of rapping, the crucial, intricate vocal element of hip hop music, as we know it today. Furthermore, the prominence of rapping took hip hop culture from its essentially underground spheres of publicity to mainstream platforms and enabled it to reach a status of popular culture. Rap music, as we will see, has become a relevant, billion-dollar business in the music industry, not just in the United States but all across the globe.

However, hip hop culture expands well beyond music, that is, DJing, MCing and breakdancing; another central element is graffiti, which encompasses writing, tagging, and painting. Not only did graffiti art precede MCing in the formative years of hip hop culture, but it was around even before the name hip hop was heard, being linked to it only later in the 1970s. For instance, as Wayne Marshall points out when addressing DJ Kool Herc's relocation to and DJing in New York City, the "'Kool' part of Clive's new name arose from his early adventures as a graffiti writer […] since 'Clive'—not an uncommon name in Jamaica—continued to serve as yet another marker of his foreignness" (2007, p. 6). Like hip hop DJing and breakdancing, graffiti art was developed by youths (mostly African-American and Latino/a) in the marginalized areas of New York. Another crucial aspect shared by these urban subcultures is that they played a crucial sociopolitical role in sublimating the violence of street gangs, mainly in the Bronx. Through artistic competitions and displays of skills, graffiti artists, like break dancers, DJs and MCs, were facilitators for the emergence of groups driven by symbolic confrontation as opposed to the real, physical violence and crime of street gangs. On the whole, these subcultural groups, although not related at first, were products of the same difficult reality. As Glenn O'Brien argues, "It's like, what's the connection between

jazz and Abstract Expressionism? They weren't the same people doing hip hop and graffiti, but there was a cultural, mental, and spiritual connection".[20]

I have introduced, although briefly, those which are widely considered the four artistic elements of hip hop: DJing (aural), MCing (vocal), breakdancing (physical), and graffiti (visual). Moreover, I have proposed a translocal and intercultural understanding of their development, approaching the history of hip hop, from its early stages, as simultaneously a product and process of Black Atlantic creativity, The immense galaxy of hip hop culture can only be properly mapped when its distinct constellations are taken into account, and these include musical traditions produced far beyond the *when* and *where* of 1970's New York. For instance, we have seen how West African rhythms were incorporated into Caribbean musics dating back to the 19th Century; we have seen how these Afro-Caribbean roots informed the development of hip hop culture in a translocal dynamics between Jamaica and the U.S. Finally, we have seen how certain technologies, such as the Jamaican sound system and the turntable, were manipulated and resignified by the skilled hands of DJs such as Kool Herc, giving rise to an entirely new culture.

However, hip hop has traveled much further, and has become a phenomenon of global proportions. Its (re)appropriation in different, distant localities has been prompted by a complex cultural network involving music, dance, graphic art, clothing, technology, and lifestyle, and also involved the prominence of what came to be known as the fifth element. Suggested by one of the forefathers of hip hop, DJ Afrika Bambaataa, this element refers to the knowledge that is constitutive of hip hop culture. In other words, the fifth elements is what informs artists, activists and enthusiasts all across the globe through an understanding of shared traditions and shared struggles, and it underlies hip hop's translocal development.

The fifth element is part of hip hop's sociopolitical potential today, part of the history of Djs, MCs, breakdancers, graffitists, and hip hop fans in different localities. Their history, as Paul Gilroy puts forward, "constitutes the lineage of a variety of social thought—a movement or sequence of movements in cultural politics and political culture" (GILROY, 1993, p. 47). It is precisely this sequence of movements which enabled hip hop to become not only relevant outside the U.S., but to reach a status of popular culture, as happened in Brazil—a hip hop world power today.

[20] EHRLICH, Dimitri; EHRLICH, Gregor. Graffiti in Its Own Words. 2006. Avaiable at: https://nymag.com/guides/summer/17406/. Accessed on: 5 jun. 2021.

2.4 The Roots of Brazilian Hip Hop

As we have seen, the origins of hip hop in the Bronx were marked by translocality and hybridity—in other words, the social, geographic and cultural catalysts for the emergence of this art movement far exceeded the borders of New Work City. Hip hop is the intercultural product of a complex sequence of movements of African-American, Caribbean and Latino people and their musical and cultural traditions. It also gives continuity, as Paul Gilroy suggests, to a long history of Black Atlantic creativity, which involved not only the relocation of people and artifacts across the Middle Passage, but also the resignification of musical elements, from West-African rhythms to Afro-Caribbean mento and calypso, from Jamaican ska and reggae to U.S. funk and soul. Moreover, the development of hip hop as popular culture has been linked to sociopolitical struggles in Modernity. The Great Depression starting in 1929, the Vietnam War and the Jamaican sociopolitical upheaval in the mid-1950s, as well as gang violence in the Bronx in the 1960s: these are among the significant chapters in the history of hip hop, a history of migration, social struggle, and artistic creativity. From this context, hip hop culture has oftentimes been synonymous with social awareness, activism, and the redesigning of identity—which not only came to constitute the fifth element, or the simultaneously intercultural and translocal knowledge of the traditions that underlie the hip hop movement, but also enabled hip hop to travel far and wide to find fertile ground in other lands, such as Brazil.

The rise of hip hop culture in Brazil is also representative of translocality, hybridity, and resignification. Although it first became popular in the 1980s in São Paulo, center of the country's largest metropolitan area with over 20 million people,[21] the crystallization of Brazilian hip hop is also part of a history of migration and the constitution of the sociogeographic spaces of *favelas.* Derek Pardue carried out his research in ethnomusicology in São Paulo in the mid to late 2000s, which resulted in his book *Ideologies of Marginality in Brazilian Hip Hop*. Pardue's work provides a mapping of Brazilian hip hop history, and also gives us insight into the movement in contemporaneity, through numerous interviews and a meticulous field work, oftentimes relating Brazilian hip hop to its U.S. counterpart. According to the sociocultural anthropologist, hip hop historicity emerges from Brazilian urbanization

[21] For more information regarding the metropolitan area of São Paulo, see: https://noticias.r7.com/economia/grande-sao-paulo-concentra-23-da-populacao-e-33-da-renda-nacional-25062020

and from a massive, southeast-bound process of domestic migration which dates back to the mid-20th Century:

> From the beginning of the Brazilian Republic (1889) to the 'New State' (Estado Novo) under dictator Getúlio Vargas (1937–45), a shift of regional power occurred placing the southeast, including the states of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul, Minas Gerais, and Paraná, as more powerful and influential than the northeast, represented by the traditional aristocracy of the states of Bahia and Pernambuco. The second "boom" of domestic migration in the 1950s and 1960s, from the northeast to the southeast, represents a continuation of this general trend. Migrants headed for São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and the new capital city of Brasília in search of employment and a better standard of living. They would become the first generation of the contemporary *periferia.* (PARDUE, 2008, p. 47).

Pardue argues that the formation of *periferia* and large shantytown areas mainly in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Brasilia is crucial for the understanding of Brazilian hip hop culture as intrinsically linked to demography. In the 1970s, these areas were receiving a massive flow of migrants from the northeast (who would also constitute a substantial part of the workforce in those cities and their satellite regions). In spite of their social invisibility, people living in the *periferia*—Blacks (negro/as, preto/as, pardo/as, etc), (sub)urban migrants (nordestinos), and other marginalized individuals—were catalysts for the consumption and development of samba-rock, soul, funk, and paved the way for the transition to hip hop. This was the context for the emergence of the so-called *bailes black,* or "Black music" dance parties, which became widely popular from the mid-1970s and throughout the 1980s. It is important to note that this was a period of military dictatorship (1964-1985), and these parties were under constant jeopardy due to police violence and restriction. Nevertheless, the hardships manifested through structural and brutal forms of racism and segregation, socioeconomic depravity, as well as the daily violence undergone in the *periferias* served as fuel for the rise of an oppositional consciousness in Brazilian hip hop ideologies, and an increased sense of community among the dwellers of these marginalized spaces, which is precisely why Pardue proposes that the "ideologies of empowerment of hip hop historically based in working-class-community organizing and 'information' of globalized 'blackness' contain a spatial dimension as well" (PARDUE, 2008, p. 47).

In acknowledging the emergence of Brazilian hip hop as linked with the constitution of the *periferias,* or as Purdue puts with, the crucial "interconnections of demography and expressive culture" (2008, p. 47), we can see that this simultaneously artistic and social movement has been political and diasporic from its outset, both in Brazil and in the United States (as demonstrated in the previous section of this chapter). If on the one hand, as we have

seen in our discussion of Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic,* "hip hop culture grew out of the crossfertilisation of African-American vernacular cultures with their Caribbean equivalents rather than springing fully formed from the entrails of the blues" (GILROY, 1993, p. 103), on the other hand, the origins of Brazilian hip hop bring to the fore a specific kind of translocality: it did not spring fully formed from the "original" U.S. hip hop. It is widely recognized that the relocation of material imported from the United States was fundamental (e.g. vinyl records of U.S. rap, funk, and soul, as well as Jamaican reggae), as was the assimilation of Black Power attitude and Blackness consciousness, also stemming from the United States (once again, echoes of James Brown's famed statement "say it out loud, I'm black and proud", and the discourses of Black leaders such as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X). However, the translocality imbued in Brazilian hip hop also involved the aforementioned process of domestic migration from the Northeast regions and the formation of *periferias*, namely in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Brasília.

The syncretic dynamics which prompted the development of a unique, National hip hop movement, beginning in São Paulo, also involved the cross-fertilization of musical cultures brought from the Northeast regions, as manifested through the "obvious link" between Brazilian rap and the *repente*, "a griot-style of shouting out the local news in a complex rhyme scheme accompanied by a strummed steel-string guitar" (PARDUE, 2007, p. 35), originated in the state of Paraíba in the 19th Century. Similarly, in spite of the key influence of the aforementioned African-American leaders, Brazilian hip hop culture has found fertile ground in the legacy of resistance to colonial oppression left by national symbols, such as the Brazilian (believed to be of Kongo origin) quilombola leader Zumbi dos Palmares—in reference to the name of the settlement where he was born free, a self-sustaining territory of Afro-Brazilian people who fought their way out of slavery. In other words, the translocality which prompted the birth of Brazilian hip hop was simultaneously geographical and cultural, involving the key cross-fertilization of Brazilian and African traditions.

In this sense, the formation of this national movement is similar to the context of U.S. hip hop: both movements are diasporic in nature (albeit according to the colonial/modern histories of their specific settings), and the crossing of borders, at once geographical and cultural, marks their emergence and their development to this day. On the whole, hip hop culture provides us with a lens through which we can better observe and make sense of the tense encounters of Modernity, as further discussed. It also gives rise to new, alternative

narratives for redesigning identity and retelling periphery "reality" in ways that legitimize and empower marginality, imbuing it with a notion of positivity rarely seen in mainstream, hegemonic narratives (e.g. mass media and traditional historiography). As Pardue suggests, this

> 'positivism' implicitly involves new processes of identification in which hip hoppers imagine their particular issues of locality (detailed so well in 'marginal' hip hop), as similar to other peripheral or marginalized communities in other places and other times. In short, 'positivists' see hip hop as more diasporic and historical in scope. Such a perspective is important, because it means that the ideas and material for local change can come from afar. (PARDUE, 2008, p. 7).

Thus, Pardue understands translocality in Brazilian hip hop as stemming partly from a more positive treatment of periphery "reality": a strategy to make sense of shared struggles across distant places through the exchange of information and technology, and "create transnational and translocal 'unity' among hip hoppers" (2008, p. 7). The author differentiates this "positive" approach from that of "marginal" hip hop. While the first serves the purpose of identifying similar problems in different communities (in and outside Brazil) and using this translocal, diasporic and historical identification as a catalyst for social change, the latter focuses on particular issues of locality, in a more grounded and detailed treatment of periphery realities, highlighting the local specificity of each community. However, it is important to note that both of these two ideologies played a part in the rise to popularity of Brazilian hip hop, not as opposing trends, but as complementary facets of the same movement.

As we have seen, the popularity of *bailes black* ("Black music" dance parties) in the 1970s and the samba-rock, soul, and funk that was played in the nightclubs were important musical agitators for the formation of Brazilian hip hop. In spite of the fact that Brazil was under dictatorial rule, oppositional fronts were coming from within and from outside, and the "Black Power Movement in the United States, although in organizational demise, was at its highest point of national and international exposure" (2008, p. 45). The powerful speeches, racial pride, and cultural accomplishments from the Movement and the ongoing battles in civil rights taking place in the U.S. echoed in Brazilian *periferias*, where people found renewed inspiration to organize themselves according to a unified sense of Black cultural politics and personal expression aimed at igniting social change.

Moreover, the Brazilian Unified Black Movement (Movimento Negro Unificado), created in São Paulo in 1978, played a crucial role for the articulation of Black cultural

politics and operated in regular partnership with hip hop all across the state. Pardue explains that "while MNU representatives saw the emergent hip hop culture as an important channel into youth communities of African descent, hip hop organizations perceived the MNU as an important organization with which they could 'traffic information'"(2008, p. 45).

Similarly to what happened in the early stages of hip hop culture in late 1960s Bronx, with the increasing popularity of DJ Kool Herc's sound system dance parties, the development of nightclub circuits in São Paulo and the promotion of musical contests put out by sound crews were facilitators for the establishment of hip hop as popular culture, contributing immensely for the commercialization of National rap music. As Pardue recalls, "*Chic Show* was the first crew to explicitly incorporate a time slot for rap during the dance parties called the rap club.[…] By the mid-1970s, they, along with sound crews such as Black Mad, Zimbabwe, and later Kaskatas (1981), dominated the dance party production scene" (2008, p. 36). With the advent of the nightclub circuit, these crews, responsible for organizing musical events, began producing their own sound recordings in the 1980s. These were in fact music compilations,[22] introducing some of the most important pioneers in Brazilian rap, such as Thaíde and DJ Hum, who were featured in *Hip-Hop Cultura de Rua* (released in 1988 through Eldorado records) with their song "Corpo Feachado". However, it was a year later, in a compilation entitled *Consciência Black, Vol. I* (1989, Zimbabwe Records), that Brazil's most influential rap group first appeared. Thus emerged Racionais MC's, the critical watershed in Brazilian hip hop culture.

Before addressing their music, it is important to emphasize that the emergence of Racionais MC's along with the aforementioned hip hop pioneers within the domestic music industry stemmed from an underground context. Such context included not only the prominence of underground dance parties and independent recording processes, but also clandestine graffiti activity and various, oftentimes spontaneous events put out by breakdancing crews, and later crystalized in the form of hip hop *posses* (discussed in the following sections). This context reveals the synergic relationship between the different forms of expression that constitute hip hop culture—rapping, DJing, graffiti painting, deejaying and the sharing of knowledge.

[22] "These include *Ousadia do Rap* (1987, Kaskatas), *O Som das Ruas* (1988, Chic Show), *Hip Rap Hop* (1988, Região Abissal), *Situation Rap* (1988, FAT Records), *The Best Beat of Rap* (1989, Kaskatas*), The Culture of Rap* (1989, Kaskatas), *Consciência Black* (1989, Zimbabwe), *and Equipe Gallote* (1990, FAT Records)" (PARDUE, 2008, p. 36-37).

On a similar vein, in *Hip-Hop: a Periferia Grita* (2001), journalists Janaina Rocha, Mirella Domenich and Patrícia Casseano shed light on national hip hop's underground formation and on the coalitional endeavors—within and outside *periferia*—that were key for the development of local hip hop scenes:

> A cultura hip hop – afinal, a cultura não é propriedade da academia, do governo, da burguesia—pertence àquele que é capaz de produzi-la. Então se constata um fenômeno sociocultural em que, rejeitando a sedução do 'ouro de tolo' oferecido pelo monopólio da indústria fonográfica fabricante de modismos comportamentais, muitos desses jovens organizam-se em *posses*, Brasil afora, realizando estudos e eventos, produzindo arte, interferindo na linguagem e na metodologia educacional, reivindicando políticas públicas e propondo resistência, independência, autenticidade, atitude. Isso porque o hip hop não foi inventado pela mídia. Nasceu naturalmente, nas ruas, forjado em sangue, suor e lágrimas. (ROCHA *et al*., 2001. p. 10).

As the authors bring forth, the underground scenario of Brazilian hip hop culture in its formative years involved an essentially peripheral participation, out—and oftentimes suspicious—of the domains of academia, the elite, the press and mass media, and the monopoly of consolidated domestic and international recording industries; which does not mean, however, that pioneering hip hoppers refused working alongside state agencies or seeking the support of wider spheres of publicity. Rather, this was a vital strategy for claiming better public policies contemplating peripheral spaces, as well as for obtaining financial aid, access to public buildings, and various material resources.

To this day, although Brazilian hip hoppers (even the more famous ones, such as Racionais MC's) have frequently claimed an underground status, it is not in disregard of a long history of collaboration with government, public and private agencies, NGOs and diverse social and media enterprises. They do so as informed by what Rocha, Domenich and Casseano call an ideology of self-valorization (ROCHA *et al*., 2001, p. 18) that became fundamental for the consolidation of a national hip hop movement, articulated through a Black political standpoint of pride and through the conscious refusal of certain stigmas (e.g. violence, marginality, and inferiority) associated with this subculture—stigmas which have been continuously reinforced through state apparatuses and social functions. Hence, the underground ideology of Brazilian hip hop has less to do with a notion of isolation or independence from wider state and public spheres, and more with a justified suspicion that manifests itself even when coalitional efforts among them are taking place.

2.5 Denouncing the Urban Hell: Enter Racionais MC's

As we have seen, a fundamental part of the hip hop movement—as it came to be constituted not only from its diasporic origins in the United States during the late 1960s, but perhaps mainly in Brazil in the early 1980s—refers to a character of social commentary, often denunciatory, and activism. The Brazilian rap group Racionais MC's was formed in 1988 through the encounter between four residents of São Paulo *periferia*: Pedro Paulo Soares Pereira (Mano Brown), Paulo Eduardo Salvador (Ice Blue)—both from the extreme south of the city, or Zona Sul—, Edivaldo Pereira Alves (Edi Rock) and Kleber Geraldo Lelis Simões (KL Jay), from the northern area, Zona Norte. Racionais MC's are among the pioneers of national hip hop, and have carried out a denunciatory endeavor in their music since their early releases in rap collections. The group's first EP, entitled *Holocausto Urbano*, came out in 1990 and, among its 6 tracks, includes the songs "Pânico na Zona Sul" and "Tempos Difíceis" (which had originally appeared in *Consciência Black, Vol. I*). With the debut album, Racionais MC's displayed their sociopolitical commitment through lyrics that contained extensive reports and denounces of racial discrimination and misery undergone in São Paulo periphery, the continuous brutality stemming from drug trafficking and police violence, as well as social conditions marked by inequity and erasure, issues made chronic through general state corruption. Such indictments are illustrated in the following lines from "Pânico na Zona Sul":

> Então quando o dia escurece
> Só quem é de lá sabe o que acontece
> Ao que me parece prevalece a ignorância
> E nós estamos sós
> Ninguém quer ouvir a nossa voz
> Cheia de razões calibres em punho
> Dificilmente um testemunho vai aparecer
> E pode crer a verdade se omite
> Pois quem garante o meu dia seguinte
> Justiceiros são chamados por eles mesmos
> Matam, humilham e dão tiros a esmo
> E a polícia não demonstra sequer vontade
> De resolver ou apurar a verdade
> Pois simplesmente é conveniente
> E por que ajudariam se eles os julgam deliquentes
> E as ocorrências prosseguem sem problema nenhum
> Continua-se o pânico na Zona Sul. (RACIONAIS MC'S, 1989).

Although the group's following records achieved commercial success (for instance, their 1993 album *Raio X do Brasil* sold over 200,000 copies), it was with *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* (released in 1997 through their independent record company, Cosa Nostra), that

Racionais MC's became Brazil's most influential rap group. In spite of its independent release, *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* sold over 1.5 million copies; the awarded album also received a self-titled book edition in 2018, and was part of the reference material for UNICAMP's 2020 University Entrance Exam.[23] The 160-page book edition included so far unpublished photos and information on Racionais MC's, song lyrics for the complete tracklist, as well as an introductory article entitled "O Evangelho Marginal dos Racionais Mc's", by Acauam Silvério de Oliveira. As he argues, the impact of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* in the national sphere can easily be compared to that of other great works belonging in diverse cultural fields (such as *Memórias Póstumas de Brás Cubas*, by Machado de Assis, *Grande Sertão: Veredas*, by Guimarães Rosa, *Terra em Transe*, by Glauber Rocha, and *Chega de Saudade*, by João Gilberto). He also proposes that, in political terms, the album is virtually unparalleled, as it has contributed for the expansion of debates on identity beyond the narrow borders of academia and social movements, thus reaching broader fields of culture (2018, p. 13). The parallel traced by Oliveira highlights an important attribute of the album: it operates as a unified narrative (which he approaches in similarity to other art forms, such as Literature and Film); in other words, narrativization through music is brought to the fore. In the case of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*, the lyrical content constitutes a counter-narrative.

Sobrevivendo no Inferno is perhaps the best example of the social criticism and activism carried out by Racionais MC's since their emergence in the hip hop scene. The album is, at once, a narrative of violence and collective solidarity. Its starting point refers to the most violent episode in the history of the Brazilian prison system. The massacre of Carandiru, which took place in São Paulo in 1992, was the result of an intervention by the São Paulo Military Police, culminating in the deaths of at least 111 detainees, most of whom were first offenders. These and other police interventions (such as the massacres of Candelária and Vigário Geral, in 1993, Rio de Janeiro) are understood in the album's narrative as part of a systematic, genocidal model of social organization. As Oliveira argues, this model remains anchored in a series of mechanisms inherited from slavery and perfected during the dictatorship, a model that is directed not only against those considered "criminals", but has become a general norm, with almost unrestricted approval of public opinion (2018, p. 11). Oliveira also suggests that the "revolutionary way" in which Racionais MC's have approached the issue of violence (more precisely, social, state, police, and trafficking

[23] More information available at: https://noticias.r7.com/sao-paulo/album-de-racionais-mcs-entra-nas-leituras-obrigatorias-da-unicamp-23052018.

violence) and daily life in São Paulo *periferia* has made them a vector for peripheral productions in various artistic segments (e.g. literature, theater, cinema and television) (2018, p. 13).

Thus, *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* constitutes an alternative narrativization of peripheral realities, or a kind of counter-narrative, which, in opposition to those routinely (re)produced by the mainstream media, seeks to resignify the *favela* as a heterogeneous sociogeographic space, and provide an understanding of the different subjectivities of the peripheral resident who assumes his or her condition, being proud of this place and acting politically from it. From this perspective, Oliveira suggests that the term "periphery" designates no only "poverty and violence", as commonly addressed in official and academic discourses, but also "culture and power", confronting the genocidal logic of the State, and giving rise to other modes of speaking (2018, p. 13).

In other words, the album's narrative represents a break with the homogenizing discourse of misery and criminality promoted by the mainstream media, giving resonance to different voices and different characters, describing contrasting experiences, desires and fears. The songs in *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* are at once narrative and dramatic, as different members of Racionais MC's embody different personas, which in turn are complex, multifaceted, and voice out diverging viewpoints regarding life in the periphery. However, it is not solely a matter of representation. Racionais MC's, as Oliveira puts forth, have contributed to the construction of a discursive space in which peripheral citizens could appropriate their own image, building for themselves a voice that might change the way of seeing and experiencing poverty in Brazil (2018, p. 13). It is, then, an agenda of self-construction, permeated by the experiences of the musicians themselves as residents of the outskirts of São Paulo, and also illustrative of the development of the hip hop movement across peripheral communities—a development carried out in face of limited resources.

The organizational structure of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* presents a degree of cohesion that permeates all the songs, as if they were part of a long, unified narrative. The tracks are interconnected not only thematically, but also aurally (there is no pause or silence between most of the tracks, as the ending of the previous coincides with the beginning of the next). Moreover, song introductions often contain sounds from actual television news and radio programming. This aural feature further highlights the opposition between the "official" narratives of the mass media and the counter-narratives presented throughout the album. As

discussed further, these introductions create an aural landscape aimed at situating the listener at the time and place in which the narrative is being broadcasted or televised, just before the verses start telling (or singing) an opposing narrative—the lyrical content of the song. A sense of liveness, "presenceness", and urgency unfolds, and is reinforced by the aggressiveness and tension in the voices that interpret the numerous lines. Moreover, the arrangements, the heavy beats, and the use of samples (recorded fragments and sounds of other compositions and other instruments, from different musical genres) effect drastic changes in the tone of the song—not only the musical, but also the narrative tone. This sense of urgency is reiterated in the cautious descriptions and thematizations of peripheral realities throughout the entire, unified narrative that constitutes the album.

Walter Garcia argues that this adjustment between formal language and the content of the experience stems from vigorous aesthetic work. Although *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* is informed by the "privileged voice from the periphery", this is not the starting point of the album, but an aesthetic result. Despite the fact that this result can only be obtained from the peripheral reality, the relationship between standpoint (or "lugar de fala") and narrative structure is not preordained or automatic (apud OLIVEIRA, 2018, p. 16).

The different characters presented in the songs are frequently detached from the rappers' point of view. The members of Racionais MC's also position themselves as archetypes, representing a few among numerous possible perspectives in peripheral everyday life. In these songs, we hear a multiplicity of voices and characters, with different tendencies, opinions, attitudes, aspirations and anxieties. Oliveira proposes that the diversified narrativization of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* works in favor of a denser perception of peripheral reality by imbuing the dispersion of fragmented private experiences with a general sense of collectivity, opposing the idea of a final truth. An example of this multiplicity of perspectives, as he explains, is the song "Diário de um Detento", which resulted from the co-authorship of Mano Brown and Jocenir Prado, a survivor of the Carandiru massacre. The inmate's notebooks circulated around the prison, for the observation and approval of the prison collective before its final version (2018, p. 17). The multiple perspectives conveyed throughout the album are not limited to the peripheral daily life, but also enter other marginalized spaces—in the case of this song, a prison community, from which one of the inmates took active role in the composition of the song lyrics.

The multiplicity of voices presented in *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* also brings conflict to the fore, as illustrated in "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3". The song depicts a character abusing drugs, and who is reprimanded in the verses by Ice Blue. However, as Oliveira explains, whenever Ice Blue's lines showcase a posture of exclusion of this subject, Brown's voice immediately emerges, further complicating the opposition, as illustrated in the following lines:

> ICE BLUE
> Ei, Brown, sai fora, nem vai, nem cola
> Não vale a pena dar ideia nesses tipo aí
> [...]
> MANO BROWN
> Veja bem, ninguém é mais que ninguém
> Veja bem, veja bem, e eles são nossos irmãos também
> ICE BLUE
> Mas de cocaína e crack, uísque e conhaque
> Os mano morre rapidinho, sem lugar de destaque
> MANO BROWN
> Mas quem sou eu pra falar de quem cheira ou quem fuma?
> Nem dá, nunca te dei porra nenhuma. (RACIONAIS MC'S, 1997).

In spite of the various conflicts and contradictions stemming from the multiplicity of voices presented in the album, one element remains constant. In this musical narrative, characters that follow the path of crime invariably have a tragic ending. Oliveira proposes that the album's main lesson may be that a life of crime has no future, as said in the lyrics of "Diário de um Detento" ("A vida bandida é sem futuro"); the point of view of the songs dealing with criminality and violence is more complex than the gaze of the conservative "good citizen" (for whom a good criminal is a dead criminal) and that of the "human rights defender'" (for whom the criminal is merely a victim of society) (2018, p. 20). The sense of warning, in this case, is not presented in a professorial and authoritarian tone aimed at providing one final word, or an absolute truth, but stems from the careful and humble posture of a kind of marginal shepherd, one who aims to "conquer peace violently" ("Diário de um Detento") carrying an "Old Bible, an automatic pistol" and "a feeling of revolt" ("Genesis") (OLIVEIRA, 2018, p. 18). The narrativization (both textual and aural) composed by Racionais MC's constitutes an uncompromising, loud wake-up call aimed at informing peripheral subjects for the construction of a community ethics, based on collective solidarity, and potentially saving lives.

The perspective of urgency and salvation conflates with the album's cover art, which resembles the Bible, and the structural organization of the various tracks, which forms a kind

of conceptual, religious "cult".[24] Oliveira argues that this organizing principle tells us that the production of the poor Black criminal as 'inhuman' is a condition for maintaining social normality. The radicalism of rap also consists in claiming the inclusion of this subject, whose exclusion is the very condition of the system's existence, recognizing in the dilemma of the detainee and the marginal the fate of the entire periphery as the other of Brazilian civilization (OLIVEIRA, 2018, p. 21). In the counter-narrative of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*, it is understood that the construction of emancipatory spaces in the periphery depends on the recognition of the varied and complex implications of marginality.

Fig. 1: Cover art of Racionais MC's' *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* (1997). Source: Wikipedia (https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sobrevivendo_no_Inferno)

[24] Oliveira's understanding of the album's structure as a cult, track by track: "cântico de louvor e proteção direcionado ao santo guerreiro ("Jorge da Capadócia"); leitura do evangelho marginal ("Gênesis"); entrada em cena do pregador do proceder, explicando (ou confundindo, a depender da necessidade) os sentidos da palavra divina ("Capítulo 4, versículo 3"); o momento dos testemunhos das almas que se perderam para o diabo, com resultados trágicos ("Tô ouvindo alguém me chamar" e "Rapaz comum"); intermezzo musical para velar aquelas mortes, interrompido por tiros que fazem recomeçar o ciclo; a pregação ou mensagem central (massacre do Carandiru) que liga o destino daqueles sujeitos ao de toda a comunidade ("Diário de um detento"), chave de compreensão do destino de todos e descrição do próprio inferno; exemplos do modo de atuação do diabo no interior da comunidade ("Periferia é periferia"); exemplos do modo de atuação do diabo fora da comunidade ("Qual mentira vou acreditar"). Ao final, um momento de autorreflexão sobre os limites da própria palavra enunciada ("Mágico de Oz" e "Fórmula mágica da paz") e os agradecimentos a todos os presentes, verdadeiros portadores da centelha divina ("Salve"). (OLIVEIRA, 2018, p. 21).

2.6 *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*: A Peripheral, Sonic Landscape

If on the one hand, *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* constitutes a peripheral soundtrack, bringing to the fore an understanding of the shared struggles faced in different localities (after all, as the song title suggests, "Periferia é Periferia"), on the other hand, the album presents a careful treatment of local specificity that challenges traditional Brazilian conceptualizations of *place* and *race*. In other words, although the album's narrative is informed by a notion of translocality aimed at constructing emancipatory spaces in the periphery through mutual, collective solidarity, this translocal endeavor is not based on abstract generalization, but on real specificity. The sense of translocality is reinforced melodically through the creative usage of sampling from external sources—mostly U.S. funk and soul music—, in a complex intercultural dynamics of musical appropriation and hybridity. Following, we will see how this apparently ambivalent treatment of translocality is carried out in the album, and how it comes to constitute a break with homogenizing, overintegrated ideas of cultural nationalism inherited from Brazilian Modernity.

Regarding the musical structure of the album, *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* contains a series of songs that, whilst borrowing from different musical sources and addressing different aspects of peripheral realities, form a large, unified narrative. The album has two opening tracks; the first, entitled "Jorge da Capadócia", revisits the lyrics and melodic tone from the 1975 eponymous original by famous MPB artist Jorge Ben Jor, of whom Racionais MC's' Mano Brown is a self-claimed admirer. The lyrical content is preserved in this musical adaptation of the song, and introduces the previously discussed notion of "salvation", as illustrated in the following lines: "Eu estou vestido com as roupas e as armas de Jorge / Para que meus inimigos tenham pés e não me alcancem / Para que meus inimigos tenham mãos e não me toquem / Para que meus inimigos tenham olhos e não me vejam" (RACIONAIS MCS, 1997). However, the song's first line (and the first word heard in the album) is "Ogunhê", giving more complexity to the album's religious attribute through combined elements of Christianity (in reference to *São Jorge*) and Candomblé, an African diasporic religion developed in 19th Century Brazil through the syncretism between Roman Catholicism and West African Yoruba.[25] As Mano Brown explains on an interview for MTV,[26] Ogum is a

[25] VOEKS, Robert A. *Sacred Leaves of Candomblé: African Magic, Medicine, and Religion in Brazil*. University of Texas Press, 1997.
[26] More information available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqxxTAImtJo.

warrior *Orixá*[27] who opens ways, which makes him a natural choice for the album's opening track. Although the lyrics for "Jorge da Capadócia" are borrowed from an MPB song (Brazilian Popular Music), the entire instrumentation, from the beats to the melodies, was taken from U.S. songwriter Isaac Hayes's iconic 1971 track "Ike's Rap II", whose lyrical content thoroughly differs from this new version. Racionais MC's' rereading is only one among numerous examples of the translocal, intercultural dynamics of rap music. This musical appropriation of Brazilian MPB and United Statesian soul music is illustrative of rap's creative usage of samples, through which DJs are able to resignify previous works and give rise to new musical productions in different contexts. Racionais MC's' KL Jay is the DJ responsible for the assembly of the beats and the overall manipulation of the samples. Regarding its melodic apparatuses, "Jorge da Capadócia" has a soulful, romantic atmosphere constructed via samples that contain a steady and simplistic 4/4 drum beat, accompanied by descending bass notes, piano flourishes, as well as a string arrangement with seamless and extended violin lines. As previously mentioned, the atmospheric sample was taken from the original "Ike's Rap II", and the lyrics from Jorge Ben's eponymous original; however, Racionais MC's' "Jorge da Capadócia" is sung by the guest trio Rinea BV, Váiner and Guilherme. The song also introduces an electric guitar solo, becoming a soul-rock hybrid towards the end.

The song's soulful atmosphere is broken in a sudden transition to the short interlude track "Genesis". Named in reference to the Bible, the track's melodic apparatus consists of a single, extended synthesizer chord lurking ominously beneath the following verses, spoken by Mano Brown: "Deus fez o mar, as árvore, as criança, o amor / O homem me deu a favela, o crack, a trairagem, as arma, as bebida, as puta / Eu? Eu tenho uma Bíblia velha, uma pistola automática e um sentimento de revolta / Eu tô tentando sobreviver no inferno". Analogously to the sudden melodic rupture introduced by the track, the lyrical content of "Genesis" disturbs the ongoing accounts of religious salvation and protection, giving way to the complex narrativization of violence and danger that is developed in the following song, "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3", and throughout the rest of the album.

One of Racionais MC's' all-time classics, "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3" constitutes a large narrativization of peripheral realities; the complexity of its lyrical content is matched by a musical apparatus combining a series of samples from different sources. The song starts with

[27] *Orixás* are Yoruba religious entities, commonly represented by aspects and forces of nature (VOEKS, 1997).

a testimony in which verses are spoken—as opposed to sung—by guest rapper Primo Preto, providing statistics that pave the way for the song's narrative of marginality:

> 60% dos jovens de periferia
> Sem antecedentes criminais já sofreram violência policial
> A cada quatro pessoas mortas pela polícia, três são negras
> Nas universidades brasileiras, apenas 2% dos alunos são negros
> A cada quatro horas, um jovem negro morre violentamente em São Paulo
> Aqui quem fala é Primo Preto, mais um sobrevivente. (RACIONAIS MC'S, 1997).

The verses are somberly accompanied by the piano note F#2, repeated in long intervals, before the introduction of the beats, samples, and rapping. Racionais MC's' usage of samples and beats from external sources has been analyzed by Jhonatan Rodrigues in "Sobrevivendo no Inferno – Os Samples" (2018). As he explains, the main riff and the beginning of the chorus of the 1971 song "Slippin' Into Darkness", by the U.S. soul band War, were sampled by Racionais MC's for the intro of "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3". The beats, however, were taken from "Sneakin' in the Back", by the jazz group Tom Scott & The L.A. Express, also from the United States. Vocals by the British pop singer Sade Adu, as performed originally in the 1992 song "Pearls", were also sampled: the two-fold calling "Hallelujah, Hallelujah" further highlights the religious aspect of "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3". Additional vocals by the Brazilian rap group M.N.R. also appear (at 2 minutes and 25 seconds into the song). Finally, bass lines from "Pride and Vanity", released in 1972 by the legendary funk group Ohio Players, were also sampled, enriching the overall groove and rhythm of the track.

This interweaving of samples is carried out alongside the likewise intricate lyrical content of "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3", making it a cluster of peripheral narratives. The song introduces the multiplicity of voices presented in *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*: Mano Brown and Ice Blue voice out opposing views regarding a nameless individual that is depicted in the lyrics as a drug addict. As previously discussed, while Ice Blue's verses illustrate the total exclusion of the individual ("Ei, Brown, sai fora, nem vai, nem cola / Não vale a pena dar ideia nesses tipo aí"), Mano Brown voices out a more tolerant attitude ("Veja bem, ninguém é mais que ninguém / Veja bem, veja bem, e eles são nossos irmãos também"), bringing conflicting viewpoints to the fore. Mano Brown's character addresses the addicted subject as an equal, but the following verses indicate that such inclusive approach (the act of acknowledging and talking to that individual, instead of excluding and ignoring him) comes with a warning: "Você fuma o que vem, entope o nariz / Bebe tudo que vê, faça o diabo feliz /

Você vai terminar tipo o outro mano lá / Que era um preto tipo A". The two voices presented in the song convey an unequivocally anti-drug viewpoint, however, Brown's character—the protagonist of the song's narrative—further problematizes the issue, opposing the systematic exclusion and erasement of drug users. Racionais MC's' Edi Rock highlights the multitude of peripheral realities that are routinely subjected to this systematic exclusion:

> Quatro minutos se passaram e ninguém viu
> O monstro que nasceu em algum lugar do Brasil
> Talvez o mano que trampa debaixo do carro sujo de óleo
> Que enquadra o carro-forte na febre com sangue nos olhos
> O mano que entrega envelope o dia inteiro no sol
> Ou o que vende chocolate de farol em farol
> Talvez o cara que defende o pobre no tribunal
> Ou o que procura vida nova na condicional
> Alguém no quarto de madeira, lendo à luz de vela
> Ouvindo um rádio velho no fundo de uma cela
> Ou o da família real de negro, como eu sou
> O príncipe guerreiro que defende o gol. (RACIONAIS, 1997).

The portrayal of multiple characters as a means to illustrate diverse peripheral realities is an initial narrative strategy in *Sobrevivendo no Inferno,* contributing to the understanding of *periferia* as a complex heterogeneous space, which nevertheless, as Derek Pardue puts forth, "hip hoppers seek to unite through discursive protagonists such as the 'marginal' and rhetorical tropes such as violence and crime in order to establish a new and different '*system*'" (2008, p. 66, emphasis added). It is important to note that the word "sistema" has come to constitute a key concept in Brazilian hip hop culture from its formative years. Pardue explains that hip hoppers refer to this system as a national hegemonic formation, and "part of Brazil's problematic socialization process" (2008, p. 12).

In "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3", Racionais MC's suggest that the "system" stems simultaneously from a nation-wide cluster of hegemonic discourses and practices and from the individual reinforcement of them, as illustrated in the following verses by Mano Brown: "Do verso violentamente pacífico, verídico / Vim pra sabotar seu raciocínio / Vim pra abalar seu *sistema* nervoso e sanguíneo" (RACIONAIS MCS, 1997, emphasis added). With the usage of the key concept *sistema* in mind, the lines suggest the tracing of a parallel between the aforementioned national hegemonic system and an individual's own nervous and blood circulatory system—in other words, a parallel between the command center of a nation and that of the human body. The song's portrayal of multiple realities is given continuity in the following track "Tô Ouvindo Alguém me Chamar", which briefly tackles the Brazilian prison system (as in the verses "Pensando bem, que desperdício / Aqui na área acontece muito disso /

Inteligência e personalidade / Mofando atrás da porra de uma grade")—a theme that is further explored in the album's 7th track. The violent effects of the systemic erasure and racialized incarceration of peripheral subjects—understood here as an integral part of Brazilian Modernity—are depicted throughout the entire, unified narrative of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno,* however, certain songs approach it more meticulously.

For instance, the fundamental problems of violence (more precisely, police and drug trafficking violence), the lack of basic public services, and the general social stigma that recurrently convert lost peripheral lives into statistics—such as those provided by Primo Preto in the introduction of "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3"—are addressed again in the album's 5th track "Rapaz Comum". The song opens with the sounds of the narration of a televised soccer match and the indistinct chatter of people watching it; this is followed by the sounds of a doorbell, a door opening, several gunshots, and the squealing tires of a car driving off. The aural landscape of the song's introduction conveys the idea of leisure routine taking place somewhere, only to be broken by a sudden and violent disturbance. The song's chorus readdresses the repeated gun shots of this aural landscape through the use of onomatopoeia ("Click, cleck, bum! / Rapaz comum / Click, cleck, bum! A lei da selva é assim / Click, cleck, bum! / Predatória"), relating the daily violence undergone in the periphery to the dangerous setting of a jungle. Analogously to its title ("common guy"), the song's instrumental structure is simplistic and steady. KL Jay uses samples from another song by Isaac Hayes, the 1969 classic "Hyperbolicsyllabicsesquedalymistic": its beats, piano chords, and bass groove starting around the 7:13 marker are repeated throughout the entirety of "Rapaz Comum". However, the DJ has shifted the original song's key (F minor) to G sharp, and replaced the funky electric guitar lines with a single, extended piano note (D#5), conveying a sense of tension and eeriness. This persistent melodic apparatus lurks beneath the entire textual narrative of "Rapaz Comum", and the following rhymed verses by Edi Rock suggest that the violent disturbance depicted in the song's introduction is not abnormal in a peripheral reality, but a common event to be routinely televised and trivialized:

> Mais uma vida desperdiçada e é só
> Uma bala vale por uma vida do meu povo
> No pente tem quinze, sempre há menos no morro. E então?
> Quantos manos iguais a mim se foram?
> Preto, preto, pobre, cuidado, socorro! […]
> Depois ficava sabendo na semana que dois já era
> Os preto sempre teve fama
> No jornal, revista, TV se vê
> Morte aqui é natural, é comum de se ver
> Caralho! Não quero ter que achar normal

> Ver um mano meu coberto com jornal
> É mal, cotidiano suicida
> Quem entra tem passagem só pra ida […]
> Não sou o último, nem muito menos o primeiro
> A lei da selva é uma merda e você é o herdeiro. (RACIONAIS MC'S, 1997).

After a brief instrumental interlude, the song "Diário de um Detento" shifts the focus from daily life in the periphery the likewise marginalized space of a prison community. Regarding its instrumental structure, the song incorporates sampled beats and bass lines from Edwin Starr's 1973 original "Easin' In", whose groovy atmosphere is here opposed by the ominous loop of two piano notes (F#6 and F6) and the occasional, simulated rattle of a rattlesnake, conveying imminent danger. This track is widely considered Racionais MC's' definitive masterpiece, and one of the greatest outputs in the history of Brazilian rap. As previously mentioned, "Diário de um Detento" resulted from the cooperative work between the group and Jocenir Prado, a former inmate that survived the Carandiru massacre. A large part of the song's lyrical content originated from notes and verses that were originally written by Jocenir and circulated around the prison, being later adapted into a larger musical narrative by Mano Brown.[28] Analogously, not only does the song stem from a context of collaboration among inmates and the direct co-authorship between one of them with a rapper, but its narrative brings to the fore a sense of personhood to the numbers—peripheral lives that are erased and trivialized in the general social stigma—behind the aforementioned statistics, as illustrated in this passage:

> Cada detento, uma mãe, uma crença
> Cada crime, uma sentença
> Cada sentença, um motivo, uma história
> De lágrima, sangue, vidas e glórias
> Abandono, miséria, ódio, sofrimento
> Desprezo, desilusão, ação do tempo
> Misture bem essa química
> Pronto: eis um novo detento […]
> Cachorros assassinos, gás lacrimogêneo
> Quem mata mais ladrão ganha medalha de prêmio
> O ser humano é descartável no Brasil
> Como modess usado ou bombril
> Cadeia guarda o que o sistema não quis
> Esconde o que a novela não diz. (RACIONAIS MC'S, 1997).

The following song "Periferia É Periferia" was primarily sampled from Curtis Mayfield's "Cannot Find a Way", released in 1974, with a slight key adjustment of one step lower. As Rodrigues explains ("Sobrevivendo no Inferno – Os Samples", 2018), this track

[28] Mano Brown adresses the song's creation in the following video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v49hOpCIEpQ

contains a wider variety of samples than any other track in the album and incorporates vocal lines originally performed in “Bem Vindos ao Inferno” by Sistema Negro, “Brasilia Periferia” by GOG, “SL (Um Dependente)” by M.R.N, and “Brava Gente” by Brazilian rap pioneers Thaíde e DJ Hum. Analogously to the usage of several samples from diverse Brazilian rap groups, the lyrical content of “Periferia É Periferia” is informed, as its title suggests, by a translocal understanding of shared struggles across numerous *periferias* in Brazil. These include drug trafficking and police violence, precarious living conditions, drug and alcohol abuse, as well as their relationship to racial inequity and general State corruption, as illustrated in the following verses by Edi Rock:

> Muita pobreza, estoura a violência
> Nossa raça está morrendo mais cedo
> A verdade seja dita […]
> É complicado, o vício tem dois lado
> Depende disso ou daquilo, ou não, tá tudo errado
> Eu não vou ficar do lado de ninguém porque:
> Quem vende a droga pra quem?
> Vem pra cá de avião ou pelo porto, cais
> Não conheço pobre dono de aeroporto e mais […]
> Periferia é periferia (em qualquer lugar). Gente pobre
> Periferia é periferia. Vários botecos abertos, várias escolas vazias
> Periferia é periferia. E a maioria por aqui se parece comigo. (RACIONAIS MC’S, 1997).

Although Racionais MC’s’ *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* is predominantly somber and uncompromising, both in terms of its lyrical content and its melodic apparatuses, the song “Qual Mentira Vou Acreditar” constitutes an ironic departure from the album’s overall approach. It contains a short introduction in which we hear the sound of a car radio skipping between stations, playing Brazilian music; then, the actual melody begins: heavy break beats and groovy bass lines sampled from U.S. funk group Mtume’s “Hip Dip Skippedabeat”, slightly downtuned from the original key of E to D#; Racionais MC’s’ KL Jay also added a synth riff to accompany the beat. This instrumental feature is maintained throughout the entirety of the track, making “Qual Mentira Vou Acreditar” the album’s funkiest, most upbeat song. Likewise, its lyrical content is energetic and spontaneous in nature, narrating night activities of leisure taking place out of the periphery, but which are nonetheless subjected the common complications of a peripheral reality. The song depicts these complications with an acute sense of irony that befits its upbeat melodic arrangement, as illustrated in the verses by Edi Rock “Eu me formei suspeito professional / Bacharel, pós-graduado em tomar geral / Eu tenho um manual com os lugares, horários / De como dar perdido”, which are followed by the sound of a police siren. Moreover, the lyrical content of “Qual Mentira Vou Acreditar”

presents a criticism to the issues of cordial racism and racial democracy, which have been recurrently addressed in Brazilian hip hop from its early stages. In this sense, Pardue puts forward that hip hop in Brazil functions as a general concept of culture, constituting an "ideology of representation and personhood positioned in relation to a cluster of primarily national hegemonic discourses and practices represented in such terms as cordial, racial democracy, tropicalism, and tradition" (2008, p. 12). The idea of racial democracy is understood here as part of the modern, national hegemonic formation which hip hoppers call *the system* ("o sistema", as previously mentioned), and part of Brazil's problematic socialization process, fiercely criticized in hip hop performances of several kinds, from rap music to graffiti writing. The following passage conveys a dialog between two characters: the rapper protagonist-narrator (played by Edi Rock), and a fictional police officer that claims to be not a racist by going through a comically long chain of acquaintances. The lines illustrate the ironic approach of the lyrical content, and culminate in the chorus, introducing the song's title:

> EDI ROCK
> Quem é preto como eu já tá ligado qual é
> Nota fiscal, RG, polícia no pé
> (voz de policial)
> Escuta aqui…
> O primo do cunhado do meu genro é mestiço
> Racismo não existe, comigo não tem disso
> É pra sua segurança…
> EDI ROCK
> Falô, falô, deixa pra lá
> Vou escolher em qual mentira vou acreditar. (RACIONAIS MC'S, 1997).

The lyrical content of the following song "Mágico de Oz", as its title suggests, makes reference to Lyman Frank Baum's classic children's novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900); regarding its instrumental apparatus, the song incorporates sampled beats, bass and organ lines from U.S. soul group Isley Brothers' "It's Too Late" (1972), however, KL Jay adjusts the samples to a faster tempo and an upper key, to better receive the agile verses sung by Edi Rock. The song's introduction features a short monologue by the young rapper Pulga do ABC ("Comecei a usar pra esquecer dos problema / Fugi de casa / Meu pai chegava bêbado e me batia muito / Eu queria sair dessa vida / Meu sonho? / É estudar, ter uma casa, uma família / Se eu fosse mágico? / Não existia droga, nem fome e nem polícia"), giving voice to the child character portrayed in the lyrics. Larissa de Medeiros analyzes the song's reference to *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, tracing a parallel between the child protagonist Dorothy Gale (who puts her trust in "strange" friends: the Tin Man and the Coward Lion) and

the child addressed in the lyrics ("Conhece puta, traficante, ladrão / Toda raça, uma pá de alucinado e nunca embaçou / Confia neles mais do que na polícia"), whose reliable familiar faces are also outcasts in society.[29] Similarly to the previous songs in the album, the narrative of "Mágico de Oz" also constitutes a criticism against a fabricated ideology of Modernity—in this case, the notion of meritocracy, central to neoliberal thought and politics—as presented in the following verses by Edi Rock:

> Que vida agitada, hein?!
> Gente pobre tem, periferia tem… Você conhece alguém?
> Moleque novo que não passa dos doze
> Já viu, viveu, mais que muito homem de hoje
> Vira a esquina e para em frente a uma vitrine
> Se vê, se imagina na vida do crime
> *Dizem que quem quer segue o caminho certo*
> *Ele se espelha em quem tá mais perto*
> Pelo reflexo do vidro ele vê
> Seu sonho no chão se retorcer
> Ninguém liga pro moleque tendo um ataque
> Foda-se quem morrer dessa porra de crack
> Relaciona os fatos com seu sonho
> Poderia ser eu no seu lugar? (RACIONAIS MCs, 1997, emphasis added).

Moreover, the song's lyrical content articulates a discourse from the perspective of a peripheral subject that criticizes the aforementioned "system". As Pardue proposes, this "reality" discourse "is *periferia*-centric; therefore, everyone and most socio-cultural practices associated with the middle and elite classes are part of *o sistema*" (2008, p. 25). In the narrative of "Mágico de Oz", this critical perspective opposes issues that are considered integral to the *system*, such as police and State corruption—understood as facilitators of drug trafficking activity in the *periferia*—as well as the violence and poverty stemming from a long history of racism, part of the *system*'s shaping of reality:

> Será que Deus deve tá provando minha raça?
> Só desgraça gira em torno daqui […]
> Se diz que moleque de rua rouba
> O governo, a polícia no Brasil, quem não rouba?
> Ele só não tem diploma pra roubar
> Ele não se esconde atrás de uma farda suja
> É tudo uma questão de reflexão, irmão
> É uma questão de pensar
> A polícia sempre dá o mal exemplo
> Lava minha rua de sangue, leva o ódio pra dentro
> Pra dentro de cada canto da cidade
> Pra cima dos quatro extremos da simplicidade
> A minha liberdade foi roubada
> Minha dignidade, violentada. (RACIONAIS MC'S, 1997).

[29] MEDEIROS, Larissa. Os Aspectos Literários em Sobrevivendo No Inferno - Rap dos Racionais Mc's. *In* XXVIII EAIC Encontro Anual de Iniciação Científica, 2019. Resumo. Ponta Grossa, 2019.

If on the one hand, some of the songs from *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* (such as "Periferia É Periferia") constitute unified narratives through a translocal understanding of the shared problems across different *periferias* in Brazil and through a call for collective solidarity, on the other hand, the album's two final tracks further problematize the translocal dynamics by giving specificity to this collective solidarity. As Derek Pardue puts forward, "Hip hop is about *transformação* and *união*. Occasionally, hip hoppers give specificity to this solidarity in the form of *nação* or nationhood. Hip hoppers propose that cultural practice should strive toward creating alternative histories of *periferia* communities" (2008, p. 26). In the album *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*, however, Racionais MC's' specific treatment of translocality stems not from an appreciation of *nação* or nationhood, but from the standpoints of peripheral subjects who recognize that every *periferia* has its own socioeconomic conditions, its own narratives of truth and ethics, and its own sets of rules. In effect, as discussed further, the unified narrative of the album constitutes a rupture from overintegrated and overly simplistic ideas of nationhood.

Predominantly sung by Mano Brown, the album's second-last song "Fórmula Mágica da Paz" contains samples (beats, bass, orchestration, and a few vocal flourishes) from the 1978 classic "Attitudes", by U.S. funk/soul group Bar-Keys. Although Racionais MC's' revisiting of the funk song borrows exclusively from its samples, one may think back to the original's lyrical content, as in the lines "Your attitude / Is what describes you / What you wanna be / It just may not be what the people say" (BAR-KEYS, 1978), after all, *attitude* is another keyword in Brazilian hip hop. As Pardue suggests, "the majority of hip hoppers connect body performance and presence to a confidence or simply 'atitude'" (2008, p. 147). In "Fórmula Mágica da Paz", Mano Brown's performance conveys such confidence through verses that refer back to his home community in Capão Redondo, São Paulo, of which the rapper sings with uncompromising, harsh impartiality, while maintaining a sense of hope: "Onde tá Jesus? / Mais uma vez o emissário / Não incluiu o Capão Redondo em seu itinerário / […] É muito fácil fugir, mas eu não vou / Não vou trair quem eu fui, quem eu sou / Eu gosto de onde eu tô e de onde eu vim / O ensinamento da favela foi muito bom pra mim" (RACIONAIS MCs, 1997). Analogously, the lyrical content of "Fórmula Mágica da Paz" brings to the fore the specificity of peripheral communities while still maintaining a perspective of collective solidarity:

> Cada lugar, um lugar, cada lugar, uma lei
> Cada lei, uma razão, e eu sempre respeitei
> Qualquer jurisdição, qualquer área
> Jardim Santo Eduardo, Grajaú, Missionária
> Funchal, Pedreira e tal, Joaniza […]
> Cada lugar, uma lei, eu tô ligado
> No extremo sul da Zona Sul tá tudo errado
> Aqui vale muito pouco a sua vida
> Nossa lei é falha, violenta e suicida […]
> A gente vive se matando, irmão, por quê?
> Não me olha assim, eu sou igual a você
> Descanse o seu gatilho, descanse o seu gatilho
> Entre no trem da malandragem, meu rap é o trilho […]
> Malandragem de verdade é viver. (RACIONAIS MCS, 1997).

The peripheral narrative of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* comes full circle in the album's final track "Salve" with the resurgence of the same melody used in the first song, "Jorge Da Capadócia", which borrows samples from Isaac Hayes's "Ike's Rap II", as previously discussed. *Salve* is another key term in Brazilian hip hop culture, referring to a respectful and heartfelt salutation between individuals. Thus, Racionais MC's' members Mano Brown and Ice Blue hail the residents of diverse peripheral communities all across Brazil, voicing out the group's translocal, collective solidarity. Additionally, the rappers make reference to the marginalized spaces of prison communities, echoing the previously analyzed narrative of "Diario de um Detento", which gives voice to the former inmate Jocimar Prado. In "Salve", however, Mano Brown emphatically positions himself alongside imprisoned periphery subjects, suggesting that although individuals can be imprisoned, hip hop ideology effectively cannot: "Eu vou mandar um salve pra comunidade do outro lado dos muro / As grades nunca vão prender nosso pensamento, mano / Se liga aí, Jardim Ivana, Parque do Engenho, Jerivá / Jardim Rosana, Pirajussara, Santa Tereza". Likewise, the lyrical content of "Salve" revivifies the religious perspective conveyed in the album's unified narrative, foregrounding a relation of proximity between the figure of Jesus Christ and Black the peripheral subject through an understanding of shared struggles, collective solidarity, and equity, as illustrated in the following verses by Mano Brown—the closing of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*:

> Todos os DJs, todos os MCs
> Que fazem do rap a trilha sonora do gueto
> E pros filha da puta que querem jogar minha cabeça pros porco:
> Aí, tenta a sorte, mano
> Eu acredito na palavra de um homem de pele escura, de cabelo crespo
> Que andava entre mendigos e leprosos pregando a igualdade
> Um homem chamado Jesus
> Só ele sabe a minha hora
> Aí, ladrão, tô saindo fora
> Paz. (RACIONAIS MCS'S, 1997).

2.7 Final Remarks: Hip Hop Translocality and Black Political Culture

This chapter has focused on the development of hip hop culture, from its diasporic origins in the United States and its appropriation in Brazil, and on the discourse of marginality and peripheral empowerment in the rap music of Racionais MC's. However, the history of Brazilian hip hop expands well beyond the scope of marginal narratives (musical or otherwise), involving a series of material conditions and a system of identity politics aimed at social mobilization.

As previously discussed, the massive flow of migration from the Northeast towards the Southeast and the formation of the *periferias* mainly in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Brasilia, as well as the oppositional consciousness developed in a working-class process during the military dictatorship (1964-85) are among the fundamental catalysts for the development of this national form of hip hop. In other words, the roots of Brazilian hip hop are in the demographic configurations and organizational practices that laid the groundwork for popular social movements in response to the military dictatorship. As Pardue proposes, "hip hoppers' contact with consciousness discourses and social activists exposed them to a number of social issues concerning class but also race, ethnicity, feminism, and ecology" (2008, p. 43). Moreover, during Brazil's transition to representative democracy, and with the resulting political openings, hip hoppers began working closely with political parties, prominent social institutions, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) "associated with the women's and black women's movements such as *Fala Preta!* and *Geledés*" (PARDUE, 2008, p. 43).

The development of Brazilian hip hop as an art movement based on cultural politics also involved the creation and occupation of spaces for the free manifestation of the five elements (DJing, MCing, breakdancing, graffiti painting, and the sharing of knowledge). This process often involved negotiations with local community leaders, NGOs, and state representatives and agencies in order to facilitate the access to public spaces where events of diverse kinds could be held, from musical performances to workshops. More importantly, the articulation of hip hop's identity politics inside the *periferias* was prompted by the establishment of hip hop *posses*, which consisted of politico-cultural groups responsible for organizing artistic events, social work projects, and collective meetings. As previously discussed, the Unified Black Movement, founded in 1978, was an important catalyst for the

growth of hip hop culture in São Paulo during the late 1980s and early 1990s, establishing partnerships with several *posses*.

Through this process of negotiations, social partnerships, working-class agency, and the articulation of hip hop ideology in and out of the *periferias*, the movement became stronger. The increased popularity resulted in the proliferation of hip hop material throughout the São Paulo area, as *galeria* commerce centers became important loci in a network of commercialization and trade of hip hop content, and for the socialization of individuals—enthusiasts, activists, artists, and producers alike. However, radio stations (especially community-based) were arguably the most important facilitator for the translocal constitution of Brazilian hip hop, and for the contact and exchange with its U.S. counterpart. Pardue highlights the increased interactions between Brazilian and U.S. hip hoppers (such as Ice-T and Public Enemy) and the trafficking of information within the local and international scene, as well as the wide range of international rap and R&B music (from the United States and Jamaica) played in Brazilian radio stations:

> one of the most important forums of hip hop distribution has been the local community radio station. During the 1990s large wattage FM radio stations such as FM 105, Transcontinental, and Joven Pan established a touch-and-go relationship with rap music. Personalities ranging from rappers such as Ice Blue (Racionais MC's) and Rappin' Hood (Posse Mente Zulu), nightclub entrepreneurs such as Natanael Valença (Kaskatas sound crew), hip hop producers such as Milton Salles (radio station owner and early producer of Racionais MC's), and popular activists such as Paulo Brown (participant in Black Movement, one-time Yo! MTV Raps VJ, emcee for various bailes black, and frequent interpreter on visits by prominent U.S. rappers such as Ice-T in 1996 and Public Enemy in 1991) all occupied the airwaves with the newest in 'international' rap and R&B. They played songs from the United States and occasionally from Jamaica, England, and France, in addition to the hottest jams of São Paulo's own hip hop scene. The radio emcees did their part in trafficking information about upcoming shows, debates, and expositions and periodically opened up the phone lines to discuss current events within the local and international scene. (PARDUE, 2008, p. 50-51).

Thus, the increasing circulation of empowering ideologies, the creation and occupation of spaces in and out of the *periferias*, as well as the exchanging of hip hop related material and knowledge across local and international scenes are integral part of Brazilian hip hop historicity, stemming from a process of peripheral autoconstruction. Informed by such historicity, the social commentary present in national rap (e.g. the music of Racionais MC's) provides insight into Modernity as it has been historically constructed and understood in Brazil, and as a result, articulates the redesigning of identity, "race", class and gender. Pardue argues that "this dimension of hip hop responsibility distinguishes Brazil from the general characterization of U.S. hip hop, which dictates a responsibility to know styles and skills

primarily and politics and social context secondarily, if at all" (2008, p. 43). Nevertheless, the author adds that Brazilian hip hop *consciência* is an uneven phenomenon—emerging from the highly heterogeneous sociogeographical spaces of the *periferias*—and one skewed by limited interests.

Brazilian *periferias* are loci of manifestation and contestation of issues such as police and drug trafficking violence, precarious living conditions, and racial inequity, as well as material examples of the "contradiction embedded in the national flag's slogan of 'order and progress'" (PARDUE, 2008, p. 20) and of the slippage between Modernity and modernization. Naturally, peripheral spaces are also sources of cultural productions aimed at demonstrating and denouncing the aforementioned, inherent ambiguities of contemporary Brazilian society. The maintenance and proliferation of hip hop in these areas (the expression of all the elements: rapping, DJing, graffiti, breakdancing, and the sharing of knowledge) has never been preordained. Peripheral hip hop culture has survived in the face of limited resources, mainly through the creation and occupation of spaces for the proliferation of the five elements, and through the creative usage of technologies.

For instance, Brazilian hip hop *sampling* and turntablism can be understood not only as stylistic apparatuses, operated through the translocal borrowing and manipulation of sounds, but also as technological and material requisites for performance and production where resources are oftentimes highly limited. In this sense, the development and proliferation of this national form shares important similarities with Jamaican sound systems and their impact on U.S. hip hop culture. As discussed in the first section of this chapter, the sound system involved the setting up of mobile discotheques and the use of audio playbacks, which at once diminished the costs and manpower necessary for organizing musical events, made up for the scarcity of local artists at the time, and facilitated the access for the low-income public, as these events became more affordable. Upon relocating to the Bronx, Jamaican DJ Kool Herc was already familiar with this context, and the prominence of his sound system parties in the 1970s prompted the emergence of hip hop culture—especially in terms of the musical hybridity involved in those events, where Afro-Caribbean rhythms, Jamaican ska and toasting, and U.S. soul music were all present (and would later be part of the musical selections in Brazilian *bailes black*). Thus, sampler technologies are integral to hip hop's politics of musical appropriation, and were vital for the development of the movement in Brazil. Brazilian hip hop added a new translocal dimension to this appropriation, mainly through rap's link with Northeastern *repente*, and the appropriation of

MPB alongside U.S. R&B, soul and funk music, as illustrated in my analysis of Racionais MC's *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*. These technologies were also necessary for the development of this national form as it stemmed from the outskirts of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Brasilia—that is, from sociogeographical spaces where the production and proliferation of hip hop culture would be impossible, if not for the creative usage of turntables and sampling (importing musical material mainly from the United States), which facilitated performances of hip hoppers and the access for low-income audiences.

From its formative years in the 1980s, the National hip hop movement has also benefited from the crossfertilization of ideologies articulated in U.S. black cultural politics with those of Brazilian *negritude*. As discussed earlier in this chapter, this translocal dynamics was prompted mainly by the attention given in Brazilian hip hop to common diasporic historicities. On the one hand, the National form found fertile ground in the ideologies of Black pride and the struggles for social change of civil right movements in the United States (especially as disseminated from the Black Power Movement in the mid-1970s) and the discourses of Black leaders from the north, such as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. On the other hand, Brazilian hip hop culture also drew from the anti-colonial legacy of Afro-Brazilian leaders such as Zumbi dos Palmares. The establishment of networking practices in this translocal dynamics was strengthened by the regular partnership between hip hop organizations both in Brazil and in the United States. In the late 1980s, Brazilian hip hoppers worked closely with the MNU (United Black Movement), NGOs, and gradually established politico-cultural groups (*posses*) aimed at promoting alternative ideologies of marginality. As Pardue proposes,

> Many practitioners, especially those with past or present experience in *posses*, articulate space to knowledge and citizenship, looking beyond hip hop itself. This is sometimes referred to as the "fifth element" of hip hop, which comes from Afrika Bambaataa's own warning for U.S. hip hoppers to form social workshops that can give a more permanent structure for youth in the practices of 'citizenship consciousness.' Afrika Bambaataa founded the Zulu Nation organization in 1974 in the South Bronx, New York City. The 'fifth element' perspective was fundamental in the establishment and administration of the Zulu Nation Brazil in 2002. (2008, p. 76)

Brazilian hip hop translocality was favored by pioneering Brazilian hip hoppers such as Thaíde and Nino Brown, who, "informed by the discourses of Afro-centric and early U.S. hip hop organizations such as the Zulu Nation" (PARDUE, 2008, p. 7), understood the importance of shared technologies and empowering ideologies for the constitution of networking practices connecting U.S. and Brazilian hip hop cultures.

National groups formed in the late 1980s, such as Racionais MC's, have from their outset incorporated a set of mantras stemming from the understanding of shared problems with U.S. Black cultural politics. For instance, the following verses by Mano Brown, presented in the song "Voz Ativa" (from their 1992 EP *Escolha o seu Caminho*), make reference to the African American leader Malcolm X:

> Precisamos de um líder de crédito popular
> Como Malcolm X em outros tempos foi na América
> Que seja negro até os ossos, um dos nossos
> E reconstrua nosso orgulho que foi feito em destroços
> Nossos irmãos estão desnorteados
> Entre o prazer e o dinheiro desorientados
> Brigando por quase nada
> Migalhas coisas banais
> Prestigiando a mentira
> As falas, desinformado demais
> Chega de festejar a desvantagem
> E permitir que desgastem a nossa imagem. (RACIONAIS MC's, 1992).

The passage is illustrative of Brazilian hip hop's articulation of ideologies of "race" and class as inscribed in a diasporic scope of networking practices—that is, the understanding that strategies coming from elsewhere can be useful for effecting social change in Brazilian *periferias*. However, as Pardue puts forward, what is important for this diasporic articulation is not a "U.S. hip hop model of 'nationalism' (political, cultural, aesthetic, or otherwise) per se, but rather a translocal sense of 'blackness' and 'attitude' moving among metropolitan areas of New York, London, Rio, Salvador, São Paulo, Capetown, Kingston […]" (2008, p. 11).

Racionais MC's' *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* incorporates and also further complicates this translocal dynamics by narrativizing historically inscribed realities of Brazilian *periferias*, drawing attention to local specificities, as discussed in the previous section. The ideology of marginality articulated in the album opposes overintegrated ideas of nationhood and approaches Brazilian *periferias* as heterogeneous sociogeographical spaces, each with their own socioeconomic conditions and their own narratives of truth. The multiplicity of voices presented in the album permeates other marginalized spaces, such as prison complexes, creating intersubjective discourses, as illustrated in "Diário de um Detento". Moreover, Racionais MC's give insight into problematic National ideologies that are inscribed in Brazilian Modernity, denouncing the ideas of racial democracy and meritocracy, for instance.

On the whole, the peripheral narrative of *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*, with its interconnected themes, is congruent with Brazilian hip hoppers' articulation of what Pardue

calls “an ideology of *marginalidade* with the objective of making a new system. […] In addition to narratives of collective solidarity, Brazilian hip hoppers employ *denúncia* as a rhetorical strategy to portray reality (*realidade*) as lacking and in need of change” (2008, p. 26). The album’s narrative strategy is, thus, part of a cultural practice aimed at countering hegemonic discourses that imbue marginalized subjects with social invisibility and stigmatization, telling alternative peripheral histories. Through a combination of social activism on and off stage, detailed denouncements of peripheral realities, and a cross-cultural ideology of marginality, these hip hoppers have contributed to a redesigning of identity and a renewed articulation of *negritude*, based on self-worth, self-knowledge, and collective solidarity.

3. CHAPTER III – ARANDU ARAKUAA AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE INDIGENOUS IN BRAZILIAN HEAVY METAL

"*Watô akw~e*
Tâkãhã tka tô wanõrtê
Watô tkaitdêkwa
Watô wdê zaure kmãdkâkwa"

("I'm Indigenous
This land belongs to us
I'm a child of the Earth
Guarding trees of great girth")[30]

Zândhio Huku

3.1 Foreword

In the previous chapter, the contextualization of hip hop's diasporic origins (regarding the travels of Black Atlantic music) and its contemporary manifestation as an artistic movement in Brazil enabled us to establish an oppositional link between the consolidation of national hip hop and key historical processes in the region, such as colonialism, Modernity, the military dictatorship, and the rise of neoliberal ideology/politics. While a simultaneously cultural and musical separation between rap and heavy metal has been often interpreted and fabricated as natural—either through common sense or common rhetorical strategies operating within and outside these two scenes—, their translocal emergence in Brazil, their configuration today, and the prominence of rap-metal hybrids expose a rather different picture. This chapter, albeit primarily focused on heavy metal, also provides a glimpse of that picture, mainly through the analysis of the aforementioned historical processes and how they have been dealt with in music. Attention to detail and further elaboration on the seemingly controversial relationship between hip hop and heavy metal are given in the two final chapters, addressing, namely, a renowned rap-metal hybrid, and the historical translocality of these two genres, both rooted in the blues—the Black mother of all modern popular music.

[30] (ARANDU ARAKUAA, "Watô Akw~e", 2015, my translation). Lyrics originally written by Zândhio Huku in the Akwẽ Xerente language.

3.2 Sabbath Bloody Sabbath – Forged in Metal

Heavy metal music is traditionally considered violent. Thematically, the inflection of violence in this genre is achieved in various ways, such as aurally (e.g. heavily distorted guitars, thunderous drumming, and preferably lots of screaming), visually (the artwork of U.S. band Metallica's iconic 1983 album displays a hammer next to a pool of blood), discursively (the album is entitled *Kill'em All* and song lyrics contain lines like "soldiers are hounding, bodies are mounting"), and through a myriad of performative and aesthetic apparatuses of which a few are addressed in this chapter. More generally, the musical culture of heavy metal is often heard as the representation of the rebellious individual, or the rebellious youth, in the form of a turbulent soundscape. What heavy metal music tends to (or does it necessarily have to?) represent in the wide spectrum of mainstream culture often follows and expands on the embodiment of its predecessor *rock*, that is, "Rock music's cultural location as a 'youth culture' form, its construction as a 'problem' for those maintaining taste and order" (BENNET *et al*.,1993, p. 9).

Contextualizing the likewise turbulent, working class origins of heavy metal in the Global North is a complex exercise. Widely considered the first heavy metal group, Black Sabbath released their first full-length studio album in 1970. The eponymous debut, while clearly rooted in U.S. blues music (a key attribute present in songs such as "The Wizard" and "N.I.B"), is marked by a distinct thickening of the electric guitar's tone and a heavier distortion when contrasted with the conventional blues and rock sounds of the time. Still, it was only with the popularization of this heavier bluesy rock music, mainly in the second half of the 1970s in England and in the United States, that Black Sabbath would be labeled as (and generally considered the originator of) heavy metal (WEINSTEIN, 2016, p. 26).[31] The precise emergence of the heavy metal genre through the hands of Black Sabbath has nevertheless been contested, I would argue, mainly due to the translocal nature of this music (not only regarding the location and mobility of artists and musical material, but the pervasive, mobile and diversified forms of engagement of the public, forging translocal scenes) and its initial stylistic proximity with other genres, such as blues/rock and psychedelic music (artists including Blue Cheer, Cream, Steppenwolf, Hendrix and others were also making heavier incarnations of these sounds). Arguably, following the genre's popularization in the 1970s,

[31] WEINSTEIN, Deena. Reflections on Metal Studies. *In*: BROWN, *et al*. *Global Metal Music and Culture Studies: Current directions in Metal Studies*. London, UK: Routledge, 2016. p. 22–31.

the evolution of heavy metal music—which involved, among several elements, a distinct sonic aggression and the frequent, explicit thematization of war, violence, and occultism—contributed for Black Sabbath's relatively stable cultural location as heavy metal's originators. The group was making this kind of music in Birmingham's urban, working class, (post)industrial context, and after World War II the city was continuously seeing waves of migration, which increased its cultural multiplicity and facilitated the prominence and popularization of different musical forms, including U.S. blues/rock and Caribbean reggae—the emergence of heavy metal is inseparable from the various travels of Black Atlantic music. The process, however, was not free of political, right-wing contestation.[32]

The impact of Black Sabbath's location and their sociocultural background on the initial configuration of the heavy metal genre is far from clear and has been continuously reevaluated—it is hard to know how (if at all) this context provided the music's violent, transgressive aura. Still, it is equally hard not take the experiences of the groups's iconic guitarist into play. In 1965, before forming Black Sabbath, Tony Iommi (then a 17-year old) lost the tips of his right hand's middle and ring fingers in an industrial accident on his last day of work in a sheet metal factory. He spoke of the event on an interview given to Ryan J. Downey at the Musician's Institute in Hollywood:

> I'd be on a line and they'd pass stuff down to me and I'd weld it, and then it'd go on to somewhere else. One day, the person that would be sending me the thing to weld never turned up, so they put me on this giant, huge press — a guillotine-type press. I don't know what happened, I must have pushed my hand in. Bang! It came down. It just took the ends off [my fingers]. I actually pulled them off. As I pulled my hang back, it sort of pulled them off. It was left with two stalks, the bone was sticking out the top of the finger. I went to the hospital and they cut the bones off and then they said, 'You might as well forget playing.' God, I was just so upset. I wouldn't accept that there wasn't some way around it, that I couldn't be able to play. (IOMMI, 2017).[33]

[32] British Member of Parliament (MP) Enoch Powell's famous, anti-immigration speech given in 20 April 1968 goes as follows: "Here is a decent, ordinary fellow Englishman, who in broad daylight in my own town says to me, his Member of Parliament, that the country will not be worth living in for his children. I simply do not have the right to shrug my shoulders and think about something else. What he is saying, thousands and hundreds of thousands are saying and thinking – not throughout Great Britain, perhaps, but in the areas that are already undergoing the total transformation to which there is no parallel in a thousand years of English history. We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependents, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant descended population. It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre. So insane are we that we actually permit unmarried persons to immigrate for the purpose of founding a family with spouses and fiancées whom they have never seen" (POWELL, 1969).

[33] IOMMI, Tony. Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi: Chopping Off Fingers + Early Bands - MI Conversation Series (Part 1). [Interview given to] Ryan J. Downey. 2017. Available at: https://loudwire.com/black-sabbath-tony-iommi-chopping-fingers-off/. Accessed on: 22 jul. 2021

After sustaining the factory injury, Iommi experimented with various types of homemade prosthetic fingertips until he eventually decided on plastic prosthetics covered with cut sections from a leather jacket: “It worked, but then I had to persevere for a long, long time to get used to working with them… and it was painful” (IOMMI, 2017). Although we look at it in retrospective analysis, the brutality of the sheet metal factory accident in Birmingham’s industrial, working class milieu, and Iommi’s perseverance to overcome it and create a ‘bigger sound’ than he had been hearing in rock music are emblematic of heavy metal’s forging. More importantly, in relying on the plastic fingertips, the guitarist was required to adapt his technique drastically—for instance, decreased sensitivity in relation to the strings leads to unnecessary finger pressure to fret notes, and techniques of bending and soloing become more challenging. In face of these issues, Iommi started using his pinky finger and down-tuning the strings more often (making them looser and softer), which consequently translated into a darker, heavier sound in relation to more conventional rock songs, which are based on the standard guitar tuning (i.e. E-A-D-G-B-e, from the top to the bottom string).

It is important to emphasize that Black Sabbath’s location in a working class context, their revision of the blues, and the experiences and experiments of guitarist Tony Iommi in heavy metal’s formative years should not be taken for granted in our systematization of the genre and its complex meta-musical characteristics regarding structure, lyrical content and melodic patterns, or its irrevocably controversial and potentially transgressive bents—tracing a markedly translocal music to a singular, regional origin is counterproductive, and an oversimplification. As Simon Poole discusses, in spite of Black Sabbath’s relatively stable role as creators of the genre (as communally or individually understood by heavy metal fans), that role “is unattributed and arguably unattributable. This, it could be suggested, is a central nodal-point in both the myriad metals that currently coexist under the umbrella of the ‘heavy metal’ meta-genre whilst also offering a possible reason for [its] astonishing longevity” (POOLE, 2016, p. 304).[34] In general, we can argue that the heavy metal community is not really concerned with the search for a “mythical singular source of style”, as Poole puts it, but with heavy metal’s sonic narratives, the contextual conditions which have prompted their proliferation across different spaces, and the (counter)cultural elements present in this scene. Still, the aforementioned events in Black Sabbath’s milieu should be factored in when

[34] POOLE, Simon. Retro Rock and Heavy History. *In*: BROWN, *et al*. *Global Metal Music and Culture Studies: Current directions in Metal Studies*. London, UK: Routledge, 2016. p. 297–310.

contextualizing heavy metal's emergence, not in an attempt to construe the movement as monolithic, but to better grasp its close relation to blues-based rock music (from which metal inherited not only melodic elements such as power chords, augmented fourths, riff-laden textures and chromatics, but crucially, musical narratives grounded on a view of society in which alternative (sub)cultures could exist and persist in opposition to the dominant social structures) and to initiate the discussion of local adaptations of a genre that has given rise to a gigantic following of global/local scenes, arguably matched only by the hip hop movement, as discussed in the previous chapter.

A reading of heavy metal's palimpsestic, translocal consolidation as simultaneously geographical and cultural (in this sense, also, heavy metal bears interesting similarities to hip hop) allows us to make sense of metal subgenres and subgroupings that have emerged in the Global South and which are markedly focused on—and musically influenced by—local specificities and cultures. Hence, this chapter aims to produce new meanings and imaginings of heavy metal's translocal history by drawing attention to Latin American and, more specifically, Brazilian incarnations of the genre in a twofold process: contextualizing National heavy metal, and analyzing a contemporary band whose work is emblematic, musically and ideologically speaking, of what is known as Brazilian Folk Metal, with a focus on Indigenous culture.

3.3 The First Rock – Disruptive Music under Dictatorial Rule

In the early 1980s, the emergence of Brazilian heavy metal stemmed from similar contextual conditions in relation to other countries in Latin America, which is not to say that those local/National scenes were intrinsically similar, but rather that local experiences taking place in different countries in the continent at that time bring to the fore a perspective of shared oppression that has crucially shaped Latin American heavy metal music, as it arose from different, albeit connected, contexts of social struggle. For instance, this chapter addresses how the enduring legacies of colonialism and Modernity, namely in Brazil, have been dealt with in heavy metal, not only nurturing the subversive ideological direction of artists and their work, but shaping the melodic apparatuses of the music itself. Centuries of imperialist exploitation and ongoing colonial violence have taken their toll on the cultural, political and economic contexts of Latin American countries in similar ways, however, the

decade when heavy metal crystalized in the Global South (the 1980s) showed even more similarities regarding the shared problems they were facing. Nelson Varas-Díaz, Daniel Nevarez Araújo and Eliut Rivera-Segarra elaborate on these contextual conditions, enumerating

> […] some examples of the sociopolitical events and dominants already in place as metal scenes emerged during the period in question: (1) the Argentinian dictatorship under a Military Junta from 1976 to 1983, (2) the Chilean dictatorship, which followed the overthrow of the democratically-elected socialist government of Salvador Allende and lasted from 1973 to 1990, (3) the multiple military presidents that ruled Guatemala from 1978 to 1982, (4) the Brazilian Military Junta, which ruled the country from 1964 to 1985, (5) the Ecuadorian military governments in power from 1972 to 1979, (6) the military rule that dominated Honduras from 1978 to 1982, (7) the Panamanian dictatorship of Manuel Noriega from 1982 to 1988, and the (8) the Uruguayan dictatorship, which lasted from 1973 to 1985. (VARAS-DÍAZ *et al*., 2020, p. 10).

The aforementioned passage highlights a key similarity regarding the sociopolitical milieu of several Latin American countries at the time of heavy metal's arrival: the rule of military dictatorial governments. Nevertheless, it is important to note that in Brazil, the early 1980s were seeing a gradual transition towards democracy—the so-called *political openings*—and the end of major authoritarian decrees issued by the military dictatorship after the 1964 *coup d'état*, such as Institutional Act Number Five (Ato Institucional Número Cinco, or AI-5, issued by dictator Artur da Costa e Silva in 1968, and officially ended in 1979), which were at the heart of the regime's subjugation of judicial powers. As discussed by Antonio Escrivão Filho and Fernando Antunes, the AI-5 granted the suspension of *habeas corpus* against political crimes and isolated certain matters coated with political intensity (namely those concerning vindication for human rights) from jurisdictional appreciation, producing a judicial culture that was sometimes alienated and coerced, and at other times condescending with the authoritarian regime (which is alarmingly reflected in the provision of justice in Brazil today [ESCRIVÃO FILHO & ANTUNES, 2017, p. 497]).[35] Also in 1979, the military dictatorship passed the Amnesty Law (or Law 6.683/79), "which did away with criminal responsibility for all individuals who had committed 'political or related crimes' in the period from September 2, 1961, to August 15, 1979".[36] On the one hand, this amnesty law prompted the return, to Brazil, of exiled musicians, artists, journalists, activists and others, who had been persecuted by the dictatorial government; on the other hand, it shielded

[35] ESCRIVÃO FILHO, Antonio; ANTUNES, Fernando. Justiça e segurança pública desde uma perspectiva de transição. *In*: *EJJL*. Joaçaba, v. 18, n. 2, 2017. p. 491-508.

[36] Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, REPORT No. 71/15 CASE 12.879, Report on the Merits Vladimir Herzog and Others in Brazil, OEA/Ser.L/V/II.156, 2015. p. 5.

perpetrators of human rights abuses (including torture, illegal detention, kidnapping, and extrajudicial execution) from trial and criminal prosecution, representing to this day a problem for the country's judicial institutions and the State as regards the treatment of grave human rights violations committed in the period between 1 April 1964 and 15 March 1985.

Although heavy metal crystalized in Brazil during that period of slow transition into democracy, the memories of abuses of power, physical and moral coercion, and diverse criminal acts committed during the 21-year long dictatorial rule were very much alive in the minds of artists and the public. After all, aside from the vast list of politicians, activists, journalists, teachers, students, members of the working class and politically/socially dissident citizens in general that were kidnapped, tortured and/or killed under the military regime,[37] famous musicians of Brazilian Popular Music (MPB) and national rock had been recently exiled. Artists such as Caetano Veloso, Gilberto Gil, Chico Buarque, Geraldo Vandré and Raul Seixas were all forced into exile due to the protesting nature of their lyrics and their pervasive performances; most of them left Brazil for Europe in the late 1960s (after the issuing of the aforementioned AI-5), returning in the early 1970s, or only after the Amnesty Law was passed, in 1979. The usage of pseudonyms and veiled metaphors in the work of these artists became increasingly more common, used as strategies for dealing with the lack of creative freedom imposed by AI-5's abusive mechanisms of political, social and cultural control. It is noteworthy that the dictatorial censorship and silencing undermined not only the production of records, but of musical events as well: both Veloso and Gil were arrested at a show taking place in Rio de Janeiro in 1968, accused by the military of distorting the lyrics of the Brazilian National Anthem during the live performance, and went into exile in the following year.

The 1980s would see the end of the military dictatorship and the popularization of national rock music; artists such as Titãs, Barão Vermelho, Cazuza and Legião Urbana, who had grown up during rule of the military regime, were free of the censorship to which their predecessors had been subjected. Nevertheless, Brazilian rock music, from its formative years, was emblematic of the rebellious, anti-establishment attitude of its original Western counterpart, with the prominence of sociopolitical commentary that displayed suspicion in relation to the deceptive, newly installed political order of the country, as illustrated in the

[37] Information and lists made available by the CNV - Comissão Nacional da Verdade (National Truth Commission) at: http://cnv.memoriasreveladas.gov.br.

opening verses of “Ideologia”, written by Cazuza and Roberto Frejat: “Meu partido é um coração partido / E as ilusões estão todas perdidas”.[38]

Brazilian rock was paving the way for the arrival of its heavier incarnation, and major international hard rock artists performed in the country for the first time during the final period of the military dictatorship. Alice Cooper’s iconic performance in 30 April 1974, at Anhembi in São Paulo, marked the beginning of what became known as rock *megaconcertos* (concerts held in large exhibition centers or arenas), with an estimated public of 158,000 people. However, shows of this magnate were still rare until the end of the regime: for instance, Queen performed in 1981, followed by Van Halen and Kiss in 1983.

Aside from the popularization of these artists in Brazil, the increased circulation of British heavy metal music (e.g. Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, and Judas Priest) in the early 1980s was a key catalyst for the development of national, heavier incarnations of rock music and their scenes; furthermore, at the dawn of the decade, Brazilian heavy metal was making its first foray with pioneering acts such as Stress, Made in Brazil, Patrulha do Espaço, and Vírus, bands that were appropriating heavy metal made in the Global North while singing in Portuguese, and occasionally adjusting their lyrics to avoid censorship from the dictatorial government.[39] Naturally, live performances and the release of musical material put out during the formative years of Brazilian heavy metal occurred at a much smaller scale in relation to their European counterparts. Ricardo Batalha argues that for most Brazilian pioneering musicians of the genre, the level of available equipment—for performing, rehearsing and recording—was precarious, and imported alternatives were particularly expensive; obtaining sheet music, magazines and materials related to the international metal scene was also a challenge. He also adds that the overall contempt of communication vehicles and the media in general (with the exception of a few radio stations and even fewer shows on television channels), as well as the retrograde mentality of the dominant society prevented a faster growth of the heavy metal scene in Brazil.[40] Moreover, it is important to note that unlike some of the aforementioned MPB and national rock artists, heavy metal originators in Brazil, for the most part, were not members of the elite classes, nor were they related to major record

[38] FREJAT, Roberto; CAZUZA. Ideologia. Intérprete: Cazuza. *In*: CAZUZA. *Ideologia.* Rio de Janeiro: PolyGram, 1988.

[39] VICENTINI, Rodolfo. Como uma banda do Pará deu há 35 anos início ao heavy metal no Brasil. UOL, 2017. Available at: https://musica.uol.com.br/noticias/redacao/2017/08/30/ha-35-anos-banda-do-para-lancava-o-1-album-de-metal-do-brasil-ouca.htm. Accessed on: 27 jul. 2021.

[40] BATALHA, Ricardo. A história do heavy metal no Brasil. 2011. Available at: http://www.heavymetalbrasil.net/brasil.html. Accessed on: 23 apr. 2021.

producers. Aside from the overall lacking financial situation of these individuals, Brazil, like most Latin American countries in the 1980s, was undergoing a dire economic crisis, with unseen market volatility, inflation, and increasing social inequality. The prejudiced way of thinking of a society still under the shadow of dictatorial rule made it even more difficult for the emerging national heavy metal scene to establish itself, especially due to its strange visual and musical styles and its overall socio-politically dissident attitude.

The year 1985 marked the end of the military regime and a milestone for Brazilian rock, as well as the beginning of an era for local heavy metal scenes: the first Rock in Rio. The large-scale music festival took place in the period from the 11th to the 20th of January, with a public of over 1.3 million people, and saw the coming of major international rock and heavy metal artists—most for the first time—to Brazil, including Queen, Iron Maiden, AC/DC, Ozzy Osbourne (the iconic front man of Black Sabbath), Scorpions and Whitesnake. Furthermore, Batalha explains that during that time, Rock Brigade, a former fan club and the first Brazilian magazine specialized in heavy metal, was also emerging, and soon formed its own recording company (BATALHA, 2011). In the 1980s, Rock in Rio and Rock Brigade were key facilitators for the popularization of genre: while the mega-concert introduced large audiences to heavy metal music, the magazine/record label prompted the visibility and commercialization of numerous emerging, underground heavy metal bands throughout the country. Crucially, both these elements should also be factored in when considering the formation of markedly translocal scenes, which relied greatly on the circulation of ideas and musical material (e.g. vinyl and tape records) among artists and audiences in Brazil and in the Global North, the major source of heavy metal influx.

Whilst this embryonic stage of heavy metal in Brazil (and in most Latin American countries) was marked by what can be considered a faithful aesthetic proximity—both in terms of visual an musical styles—in relation to what was being performed by influential artists in England and in the United States, the 1990s would see important developments towards more locally specific musical landscapes. These developments constitute the focus of this investigation, as they relate to a key cross-fertilization of musical cultures, grounded on particular issues of locality, which enabled certain Brazilian heavy metal bands to re-shape the genre itself, producing something entirely of their own and for their own.

3.4 Roots Bloody Roots – Reforging Brazilian Metal

The crucial year of 1985 would not come to an end without another turning point for Brazilian heavy metal: the release of the iconic split album[41] by the bands Overdose and Sepultura, both from the capital city of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais—from where spawned other major acts, such as Sarcófago and Mutilator. Released through Cogumelo Records in 12" vinyl format, the split album entitled *Bestial Devastation / Século XX* included three tracks by Overdose on Side A (sung in Portuguese, similarly to the aforementioned Brazilian heavy metal pioneering bands), and five tracks by Sepultura (sung in English, although challengingly translated from Portuguese).

Even though the members of Sepultura were not bilingual, the matter of language choice played an important role in Brazilian heavy metal's formative years. As mentioned previously, musicians of the genre were struggling to find their space in the music market; besides, heavy metal's visibility was further limited by the generally scarce access to musical releases and festivals put out by foreign artists, and the local scene was in its embryonic stage. Arguably, Brazilian bands like Sepultura were aware of the intricate relationship between the 'global' (e.g. Western) and the local, and of a twofold need for establishing themselves in the music industry: (a) incorporating key recognizable elements of a foreign music genre whose audience in Brazil was still emerging; (b) drawing attention of / becoming relevant for audiences and record labels abroad as well.

Regarding (a), both Sepultura and Overdose (in their split album and other early records) were incorporating key musical elements from an emergent subgenre of heavy metal originated in the United States, known as thrash metal. Whereas traditional heavy metal music was distinguished by its heavily distorted guitars, accelerated drumming, and aggressive vocals, thrash metal—also crucially influenced by punk rock—took all of these attributes to an extreme level. Pioneering artists of this subgenre, notably from the San Francisco Bay Area, included Metallica (who popularized the style), Exodus, Slayer and Testament, all of whom had released iconic albums in the early 1980s, and whose musical approach was embraced in Sepultura's and Overdose's records from that same decade. Noticeably, in the early works by these Brazilian bands, there were no significant attempts at creating something markedly original or innovative, as they seemed dedicated to aurally replicate a subgenre that was fresh out of the metal forges of the Global North, and entirely new to Brazilian audiences.

[41] Split records are albums, EPs (extended play) or singles containing songs by at least two different artists.

As previously mentioned in point (b), the endeavor of Brazilian bands to reach foreign markets was also evident in National heavy metal's formative years. Considering that pioneering Brazilian heavy metal artists were also fans and enthusiasts of influential bands from the U.S. and the U.K., whose songs were predominantly sung in English, it is safe to say that the songwriting process was informed, in numerous ways, by a particular song*reading* process. For instance, Sepultura had found reference points not only in the visual and melodic styles performed by Black Sabbath, but also in textual elements and lyrical content present in the latter's music. Interviewed by Sam Dunn in 2006 for the documentary *Global Metal* (2007), Max Cavalera—Sepultura's former vocalist and guitarist, who formed the band with his younger brother, drummer Igor Cavalera—, spoke of the educational value of heavy metal music for his English learning and songwriting processes in the period of the band's early albums: "My English came from the dictionary and Black Sabbath albums, translating everything; I wanted to know what those guys were saying, so I spent hours and hours with the dictionary, in my room, translating. […] so that was cool, that was actually educational".[42]

On the whole, Sepultura's initial endeavor to create heavy metal music with the potentiality to become popular in Brazil and beyond was, on the one hand, informed by the genre's translocal nature, and on the other, grounded on the difficult crystallization of national heavy metal music during its formative years; moreover, the band's early career involved important negotiations both in musical and spoken languages. Sepultura's stylistic attributes would have to be appealing for domestic and foreign audiences, as well as record labels, in order for the pioneering Brazilian thrash metal act to reach beyond the emergent, underground scene.[43] However, as Keith Harris discusses, the aforementioned endeavor was contradictory:

> The paradox of Sepultura's career is that their early career, which encompasses the 1985 EP 'Bestial Devastations', the 1986 album *Morbid Visions* and the 1987 album *Schizophrenia*, took place entirely within Brazil. They toured only in Brazil and their records were produced in Brazilian studios by Brazilians for a Brazilian record company. However, they produced music that made no attempt to musically or lyrically signify 'Brazilianness' and their music was consciously modelled on non-Brazilian bands and sung in English. (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 13). [44]

Harris's argument brings to the fore the prototypical attribute in Sepultura's early works, as their music incorporated qualities (both melodic and verbal) of a particular, foreign musical genre (heavy metal), and was performed exclusively for Brazilian audiences. The

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[42] GLOBAL METAL. Direction: Sam Dunn & Scot McFadyen. Canada: Banger Films, 2007. 1 DVD (93 min.).
[43] The concept of 'scene' is elaborated in the next section of this chapter.
[44] KAHN-HARRIS, Keith. 'Roots'?: the relationship between the global and the local within the Extreme Metal scene. *In*: *Popular Music*, v. 19, n. 1, 2000. p. 13-30.

paradox he identifies in this matter is that, in spite of the aforementioned conditions of locally-based production and performance, Sepultura's early albums presented no attempts at connoting "Brazilianness". It is important to note that the idea of *brasilidade* has been continuously re-signified in music (such as *Tropicália*)[45] and, more generally, culture. Nevertheless, Sepultura's paradox, as discussed by Harris, refers to the lack of markedly local elements (e.g. regional/native instruments and styles, as well as lyrical content and language) in their early albums, which were then performed exclusively for the local public.

Furthermore, Harris explains that by the time Sepultura's album *Roots* was released, in 1996, the paradox had been inverted: the band was now based in the U.S., and recording in non-Brazilian studios for a non-Brazilian company (the New York-based record label Roadrunner Records); yet, he adds that the album *Roots* "dealt lyrically with 'Brazilian' themes and incorporated 'Brazilian' musical styles including collaborations with the Amerindian Xavante people and the Salvadoran percussionist Carlinhos Brown" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 14).

As we can see, the musical translocality in Sepultura's career up to the mid-1990s involved an intricate approach towards music making and performance. Their early albums were prototypical of the emergent thrash metal genre: in order to appeal for Brazilian audiences, they made sure to maintain a certain kind of faithfulness (musically and lyrically) in relation to the few international artists with whom those audiences were familiarized. This musical approach, in turn, prompted their visibility to non-Brazilian record companies and audiences as well. The endeavor was successful, as the band soon started releasing albums through international labels, and the consequent increase in popularity and level of production was proof that Sepultura (to this day Brazil's biggest metal band) had established themselves in the music industry. Flying high the metal flag at both local and global levels, the band also achieved greater creative freedom, transcending their once prototypical approach, and began to re-shape their music with an innovative, more locally-specific appropriation of the foreign style. However, such new incarnations of heavy metal, which attended to musical cultures of specific regions, far preceded the album *Roots* and did not manifest overnight; rather, they involved a complex web of decentralized scenes all across the globe.

[45] "Cultural conflicts also came to a head in 1968, primarily within a largely middle-class urban milieu that opposed military rule. Artists and intellectuals began to reevaluate the failures of earlier political and cultural projects that sought to transform Brazil into an equitable, just, and economically sovereign nation.Tropicália was both a mournful critique of these defeats as well as an exuberant, if often ironic, celebration of Brazilian culture and its continuous permutations" (DUNN, 2001, p. 3).

Harris reminds us that by the dawn of the 1990s, these artistic developments were already in course, with the prominence of "music that attended to place, cultural origin and nationhood. […] Some of these bands incorporated 'folk' instruments and styles into their music and drew on Western classical music in order to construct a more 'authentic' sound" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 20). For instance, he recalls Scandinavian metal bands (whose lyrical content often drew on ideas of pagan ancestry and anti-Christianity), the Israeli group Orphaned Land (famous for their conciliatory message regarding the three main Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Islam, and Christianity), and the denunciatory salsa-metal of Venezuelan Laberinto, groups that expressed their own ideas of *place* through the usage of local instrumentation and/or through their lyrical narratives.

However, it is important to mention that by 1993 Brazilian bands were also on a similar path, as demonstrated in the iconic album *Progress of Decadence*, by the aforementioned pioneering thrash metal act Overdose. Its title brings to the fore a critique of nationalist paradigms that is elaborated throughout the album's lyrics (in this case, the symbolism behind the Brazilian flag's slogan *Ordem e Progresso*, "Order and Progress"). Themes that had so far been predominant in Brazilian hip hop but generally neglected in heavy metal, namely the harsh reality in Brazilian peripheries, are rescued here—as illustrated in the song "Favela" ("Brutal scenes / No one speaks / Mortal needs / No one hears").[46] Musically, *Progress of Decadence* contains diverse instrumental sections that offer an innovative mixture of heavy metal and samba: the opening track "Rio, Samba e Porrada no Morro" incorporates tribal percussions, samba whistles and *cuíca*,[47] enriching a sonic narrative in which the unexpected melodic juxtaposition of heavily distorted guitars and up-beat samba instrumentation seems to reflect the ironic intertwining of peripheral violence and carnival festivity—a recurrent lyrical content in this record.

In that same year, Sepultura themselves were re(de)fining their music melodically and lyrically: the album *Chaos AD* represents, in numerous ways, a departure from the band's early prototypical approach to metal. Lyrical content which was once limited to the genre's conventional attachment to themes of occultism and death now gives way to sociopolitical commentary, as illustrated in songs such as "Manifest" (a critique of the massacre of Carandiru, discussed in the previous chapter with the analysis of a likewise denunciatory song by Brazilian rappers Racionais MC's), and "Territory" (which tackles authoritarian State

[46] OVERDOSE. *Progress of Decadence*. Belo Horizonte: Cogumelo Records, 1993.
[47] The cuíca is a Brazilian friction drum typically used in samba music, especially in carnival festivals.

violence and the issue of systematic racism). The instrumental track "Kaiowas", with percussion reminiscent of the traditional northeastern rhythm of *maracatu*, tribal drums, and a delighting viola caipira leading melody, is Sepultura's tribute to the Guarani-Kaiowá. Like most of the surviving Indigenous peoples in Brazil, the Kaiowás, as discussed by Graciela Chamorro, have been under continuous deprivation of land and livelihood since colonial times, systematically ignored by State authorities, harassed and assassinated by militias and landowners, and oftentimes forced into dislocation (CHAMORRO, 2015, p. 56).[48]

In March 1996, national heavy metal exponent Angra (whose local and global success is arguably only matched by Sepultura) released their concept album *Holy Land*, which introduces its own narrative addressing the colonial invasion of Brazil in the year 1500 by the Portuguese; musically, the album constitutes a rich combination of elements from diverse music genres. One of Angra's most popular hymns, "Nothing to Say" takes the listener to a scenario of decimation of native peoples and their cosmologies through the violence of settler colonialism: "Guilt and shame, it's all so insane, pagan gods die with no defense / And we could go no further at all, digging the graves of our conscience / Oh, the sounds, they still echo - All of us drifting on seas of blood / The hope hidden behind the horror" (ANGRA, 1996). Instrumentally, the track opens with a percussion marked by the Northeastern rhythm of *baião*, which for its part underlies the interweaving of orchestral arrangements with an intricate electric guitar riff. Interestingly, the encounter of traditional Brazilian and European musical elements appears to befit the colonial encounter narrated in the song.

In the same month and year, as chance would have it, Sepultura's iconic album *Roots* was released in Brazil; musically, it reinforced the band's shift—initiated on the previously mentioned *Chaos AD*—from their traditional, formulaic thrash metal sound into a renewed approach. Although the style known as Nu Metal was made famous by artists such as Korn and Linkin Park, the groundwork for its development had been laid around 1990 by bands such as Pantera, with their down-tuned, syncopated guitars and slower tempo (attributes that are evident in *Roots*), and also by artists that fused heavy metal with elements from other genres, as illustrated in the rap-metal hybrid Rage Against the Machine (see Chapter 4).

In *Roots*, aside from reforging their metal, Sepultura incorporated an array of regional instruments and styles, exercising a peculiar musical treatment of locality. Prior to the

[48] CHAMORRO, Graciela. *História Kaiowa: das origens aos desafios contemporâneos*. São Bernardo do Campo: Nhanduti Editora, 2015.

album's production, the band members visited the indigenous village of Pimentel Barbosa in 1995, located within the territory of eastern Mato Grosso, where they spent two days as guests of the Xavante people. In an artistic immersion which was partly documented and filmed, Sepultura listened to the traditional rhythms of the Indigenous community, and performed dance and song in conjunction with its members, wearing their traditional body paints, joining them in music rituals. Sepultura recorded live material and found renewed inspiration for *Roots*, the English translation for the Xavante term "Itsári"—title of the album's 12th track, comprised of sections from a healing, ritualistic live performance by the Xavante along with Sepultura's own melodic input.

Roots represents to this day the apogee of Sepultura's commercial success, with over 2 million copies sold worldwide and critically acclaimed both by the popular and specialized press, as discussed by journalists André Barcinski e Silvio Gomes (BARCINSKI & GOMES, 1999, p. 153).[49] The autobiographical book, like diverse newspapers, magazines, and online articles that have tackled the album's startling popularity, highlight Sepultura's musical return to their "Brazilian roots", mainly through the incorporation of two elements that construct a sense of cultural locality alongside heavy metal: the aforementioned Indigenous rhythms and chants, and Afro-Brazilian drums (*tambores afro-baianos*, courtesy of the renowned percussionist Carlinhos Brown, as illustrated in the song "Ratamahatta"), which prevail in relation to the former, Indigenous musical elements.

Also in relation to the album's melodic combinations, Flávio Garcia argues that most academic research on the album have unquestioningly echoed the specialized media, praising Sepultura's hybrid musical experiment and maintaining a discourse that seems oblivious to more complex implications behind the band's usage of 'Brazilian', 'original' symbolic capital (GARCIA, 2019, p. 33). Upon visiting the village where Sepultura had recorded "Itsári" in co-authorship with the Indigenous community, Garcia spoke with Xavante representatives who had been involved in the musical partnership, including Paulo Cipassé (spokesman/ambassador at the time of the recording, 1995), Caimi Waiassé (responsible for the video documentation), as well as Cacique Jurandir Siridiwe and former-Cacique Paulo Supretaprã. Among other things, Garcia aimed at understanding the role of the Xavante in that process, and how their asymmetrical relationship with the band affected the final products and outcomes of the musical partnership.

[49] BARCINSKI, André; GOMES, Silvio. *Sepultura: toda a história*. São Paulo: Editora 34, 1999.

Garcia highlights that the Xavante have a pioneering, activist historical background in building connections with artists of wide commercial appeal (as illustrated by their participation in Milton Nascimento's 1990 album *Txai*). The "Xavante strategy", as he calls it (GARCIA, 2019, p. 55), constitutes the usage of such associations as a political instrument, in order to increase their visibility, as well as to articulate and claim their rights in the face of injustices recurrently undergone by the Xavante people. Sepultura's initiative to propose a musical partnership whose copyrights would be entirely licensed to the Xavante (though as discussed below, things did not turn out as promised) was valuable for both parts: the hybrid musical experiment manifested in *Roots* was given an aura of 'authenticity' in the eyes of critics and the general public, while the Xavante community made their protagonism in artistic and political fields visible to the non-Indigenous society and its government; the outcome was the propagation of their cause and the sponsoring for professional development of new Xavante leaderships (GARCIA, 2019, p. 116).

Sepultura's *Roots* is, however, a product of its time. The 1990s was a decade of wide-reaching hybridization in the music industry on both local and global levels: in Brazil, for instance, what had been done at the time of the previously mentioned *Tropicália* took renewed form in musical movements that incorporated elements from an array of different genres, and also brought to the fore a folkloric heritage. For instance, Garcia mentions the musical movement known as *manguebeat*, which began in Recife, Pernambuco, with the fusion of traditional rhythms from popular culture (maracatu and samba) and foreign styles such as rock, rap, U.S. funk/soul, and electronic pop music, defining it as a creative appropriation of Brazilian Northeastern elements that addresses, in parallel, issues of ecology and social inequality figuring prominently in the mangue ecosystem (GARCIA, 2019, p. 106). Artists such as Chico Science and Nação Zumbi (whose guitarist Lúcio Maia has worked with Sepultura's former member Max Cavalera) were also interweaving heavy metal guitars with samba and *capoeira* rhythms in the early to mid-1990s. Arguably, the folk-metal hybridization present in the album *Roots*, as another manifestation of this musical translocality, also constituted a strategic shift against the decline of traditional heavy metal forms at that time, which were losing popularity and space in the industry to other rock sub-genres, such as nu metal and grunge rock. On a similar vein, Harris explains that "Metal as a mass-market phenomenon was gradually reconstituted through 'New Metal' bands, such as Machine Head and Korn" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p.15); not coincidentally, stylistic elements made famous by both these bands are evident in the album *Roots*.

From this perspective, Garcia argues that the 1990s permeated a market logic in which nationalisms within metal arose in parallel with the solidification of the world music category; that is but one of the reasons why the author questions what meanings and signifiers potentially emerge from the musical and audiovisual construction adopted in Sepultura's *Roots* (GARCIA, 2019, p. 36). In contrast with the aforementioned "Xavante strategy" (i.e. their own political procedures in engaging on artistic partnerships), Garcia sees a "commercial strategy" (p. 117) underlying Sepultura's hybrid experiment, one that exceeds hybridization itself. For instance, the copyrights for the co-written song "Itsári" would be licensed to the Xavante upon being transferred to the NGO Núcleo de Cultura Indígena; however, Angela Pappiani (responsible for their participation in *Roots*) and Paulo Cipassé explain that the actual financial return did not last long, that issues between Sepultura and their former record label led to legal disputes, and that no funds have since been transferred to the Xavante or their legal representatives. Similarly, although the band initially kept in touch with the Xavante and even invited a few members of the Indigenous community to participate in one of their shows in Ibirapuera, São Paulo, their contact became sporadic (GARCIA, 2019, p. 61).

On the whole, *Roots* was a milestone in the history of Brazilian heavy metal: the unseen commercial success, the breaching of musical boundaries, and the bold musical treatment of locality presented in the album opened new horizons for artists that were and that would be. Harris puts forth that Sepultura's "Brazil is more than a crudely deployed signifier or a rigidly policed 'authentic' discourse. It is rather a hybrid and flexible concatenation of the discursive and the real that continually links the global and the local" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 26). As has been demonstrated in this section, however, the band's hybrid experiment was limited in scope. Musically, the incorporation of regional music styles and rhythms has a secondary presence in relation to the heavy metal component: for instance, Afro-Brazilian percussions are occasionally splashed throughout *Roots*, and Indigenous elements are few and far between. Discursively, the album's lyrical content appears distant from—and sometimes oblivious to—the cultural travels referred to in the music. Socio-politically (Sepultura's artistic partnership with the Xavante, among many other things, invites us to speak of this dimension as well), the band's diminishing engagement with the Indigenous group with whom they worked, with Indigenous elements and themes, and with Indigenous causes in general show that the experiment carried out in Sepultura's *Roots* was precisely this: a strictly musical and stylistic experiment, as opposed to a project.

3.5 Folk Elements and (Trans)Local Scenes

Although heavy metal constitutes but one constellation in the vast galaxy of musical circulations where "Musicians from the West appropriate non-Western music, sometimes collaboratively [and] Non-Western musicians and musicians from subaltern groups within the West create new syncretic forms drawing on both Western and non-Western music" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 13), this section aims at providing a window into new spaces constituted by (anti)music, (sub)culture, and (marginalized) communities, on a similar vein to the analysis of hip hop translocality carried out in the previous chapter.

As has been discussed, the 1990s were a revolutionary decade for the export and import of different music genres from one location to another, prompting the emergence of new, hybrid music forms. Such musical travels were key for heavy metal's 'resurrection' at the time: in fusing with other genres of global reach (from hip hop to classical music), while also, as Harris puts forth, allowing for the "penetration of locality", heavy metal embraced a "musical construction of place" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 26) that has altered it on various levels. For instance, metal subgenres (mainly in the category of Extreme Metal, discussed below) have grown enormously in number, highlighting the wide-reaching diversification in lyrical content and instruments used. As a result of metal music's mobility, the analysis of its 'scenes' is now, more than ever, a complex endeavor. Hence, a series of questions regarding 'hybridity' and 'appropriation' have brought Metal Studies and Cultural Studies increasingly close together.

From this context (and drawing on studies by Hebdidge, 1979; Willis, 1978; Clarke, 1981; Gelder & Thornton, 1997), Harris traces a parallel between the notions of 'subculture' and 'scene' as intrinsically relatable—although distinct—components of popular music:

> *Subculture* connotes a tight-knit, rigidly bounded, implacably 'resistant', male-dominated, geographically specific social space (if such formations ever did exist).The concept clashes with contemporary concerns about globalisation, the ambiguities of resistance and the heterogeneity of identity. *Scene*, on the other hand, connotes a more flexible, loose kind of space within which music is produced; a kind of 'context' for musical practice. It assumes less about the homogeneity and coherence of its constituent activities and members. […]My use of scene also draws on everyday uses of the concept. It is used in a variety of ways in *Extreme Metal* practice. The most common use of it is to refer to local, face-to-face contexts of music-making and consumption (e.g., 'The Gothenburg Death Metal Scene'). This is similar to academic definitions of subculture [and] scene. 'The *Extreme Metal Scene'* connotes a decentralised, global and diffuse network of producers and consumers of *Extreme Metal*. (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 14, emphasis added).

For now, let us break down Harris's passage and examine its three synergic components: 'subculture', 'scene', and the so-called 'Extreme Metal'. What the author refers to as a 'musical subculture' is a conglomerate of elements (e.g. musicians, fans, musical material, as well as networking practices integrating them) traditionally linked to a single, centralized music movement, such as heavy metal or hip hop. Both these scenes were—and to alarming extent still are—male-dominated, heterocentric, and geographically centralized,[50] revealing the persistent presence of power hierarchies of which some are addressed in this chapter. Still, musical travels from the Global North to the Global South have given rise to numerous local 'scenes': catalysts for notable changes in the aforementioned conglomerate of elements. For instance, the emergence of the Extreme Metal scene was prompted by the popularization and consequent geographic fragmentation of the heavy metal genre, when "[u]nder the influence of punk, early 1980s bands such as Venom began to develop more radicalised forms […]. Thrash, Death, Black and Doom Metal, eschewed melody and clear singing in favour of speed, downtuned guitars and growled or screamed vocals" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 14). This was followed by a process of (re)conciliation between metal bands and their locations: namely, Brazilian band Sepultura have from their outset in 1984 incorporated both thrash and death metal influences in their musical trajectory; moreover, their hybrid experiments with Indigenous and Afro-Brazilian musical elements—discussed in the previous section—, although sporadic, were pivotal for the crystallization of new, local Extreme Metal scenes in Brazil.

Harris also traces a brief mapping of Metal Studies addressing diverging views across Extreme Metal scenes in regards to nationalism, evidencing the increasing musical heterogeneity that stems from heavy metal translocality:

> As Pierre Hecker argues (2005), metal in the Middle East tends to be anti-nationalistic in contrast to the *national pride* shown in Scandinavia. Indeed, as Emma Baulch (2003) notes in the case of Bali, in some locations the faithful copying of 'foreign' extreme metal styles is a source of prestige and authenticity. For those in difficult locations, extreme metal scenes can provide a way of 'transgressing all limits of the local', as Paul Greene puts it in the case of Nepal (Greene In Press). Increasingly though, pride in even the most marginal and unpromising location has started to become the norm. For example, bands in Indonesia have started to sing in non-English languages with greater frequency (Wallach 2003). In Brazil, the later career of Sepultura shows how the nation,

[50] As the questioning of U.S.-centric hip hop model of 'nationalism' was proposed in Chapter 2, with the analysis of the diasporic scope of networking practices inscribed in hip hop history, so does the present chapter in regards to the analysis of heavy metal translocality as opposing its oftentimes monolithic, ethnocentric construction.

> initially rejected, became 'rediscovered' as a source both of pride and of musical inspiration (Avelar 2003). (KAHN-HARRIS, 2007, p. 118, emphasis added).[51]

As we dive deeper into the historicity of local Extreme Metal scenes invoked by Harris, however, problematic dynamics of 'authenticity', which have been frequent in the aforementioned scenic (re)constructions of place, come to the fore. While Extreme Metal, as an umbrella term encompassing a cluster of particularly transgressive/radical metal subgenres that belong "on the edge of metal culture [and] represent the most diverse, the most artistically vibrant, the most dynamic and also the most problematic aspects of metal culture" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2007, p. 2), was certainly not ground zero for the emergence of nationalist, sexist and racist paradigms in metal music, it certainly became the most fertile ground for their proliferation.

In the 1980s (when heavy metal reached its apogee of popularity), some bands began to take pride in moving away from the genre's globalized flows, fostering a strong—at times isolated—sense of locality. Although the valorization of the 'underground' (i.e. small-scale musical networks encompassing local scenes, such as the aforementioned thrash metal scene from Belo Horizonte-MG, which was pioneered by Sepultura, Overdose, and Sarcófago, among others) as opposed to the 'mainstream' commercial reach has been a tendency across diverse local metal scenes, the crystallization of European *Extreme* Metal involved likewise *extreme* approaches to locality. Notable examples of this scenic shift can be found within the black metal subgenre, pioneered by bands such as Bathory, Hellhammer, Mercyful Fate and Celtic Frost, marked thematically by an expansion of heavy metal's traditional relation to the occult, and musically by the lack of technical proficiency and an emphasis on simplicity—sonic rawness and speed—especially in its early stages. It was not long until Norwegian bands such as Burzum began to blur the line between the expression of extreme individualism and national pride (perhaps informed by their peculiar understanding of satanic ideologies) and fascism.[52]

Nevertheless, the black metal subgenre has never been essentially associated with nationalist/fascist paradigms; Extreme Metal scenes, especially in the Global South, have made it clear. One notable example is the Brazilian black metal band Miasthenia, formed in 1994 in the federal capital Brasília, idealized by frontwoman, vocalist and keyboardist Susane

[51] KAHN-HARRIS, Keith. *Extreme Metal Music and Culture on the Edge*. Oxford: Berg, 2007.
[52] MOYNIHAN, Michael; SØDERLIND, Didrik. Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal *Underground*. Venice, CA: Feral House, 1998.

Hécate. Atlhough Brazilian Extreme Metal scenes were already thriving in the 1990s, Miasthenia brought to the fore, on various levels, a simultaneously scenic and musical shift. Notably, in being a female-fronted band, their emergence and consolidation represented a rupture in a long tradition of male dominated metal music. Susane Hécate's extreme metal vocalization, which can be described as high-pitched screaming/growling, further emphasize the band's distinctive musical attribute, as female metal singers who dominate such vocal technique were few and far between at the time. Moreover, her keyboard arrangements transcend the conventionally minimalist and superficial black metal sonic atmosphere (usually constituted of sampled orchestrations), being a core element of complexity and melodic richness in Miasthenia's signature sound. From their outset, the band has also sporadically incorporated folk elements, such as fingerstyle acoustic guitars (as performed in the title track of the full-length debut album *XVI*, released in 2000), as well as tribal drumming and chants (which are ubiquitous throughout their latest, 2017 album *Antípodas*).

However, Miasthenia's major element of resistance to the aforementioned problematic nationalist and fascist paradigms that marked Scandinavian Extreme Metal scenes is constituted by the band's lyrical content and discursive practices. Namely, the band has openly voiced their critical opinion regarding the national flag's positivistic slogan "Order and Progress", and argued against instances of conservatism found in Black Metal scenes.[53] Moreover, informed by Hécate's far-reaching academic career (which among other fields encompasses History, Feminist and Post-Colonial Studies), Miasthenia's lyrics, albeit sung in Portuguese, predominantly address histories of colonial violence against Mesoamerican and South American Indigenous peoples, such as the Inca Civilization—Hécates's area of expertise. A meticulous treatment of historic memory, although centered on the horrors of Spanish conquest, highlights the shared struggles of Indigenous communities across the American continent, in the face of the ongoing violence of neocolonial exploitation and assimilation. Similarly, the vocabulary of such lyrical content is markedly decolonial, rescuing the significance of the colonial wound to the lived present, as illustrated in these verses taken from "Araka'e":[54]

[53] "Black Metal é algo completamente diferente de qualquer idéia de nacionalismo barato e conservador, de idéias políticas positivistas. Nós somos totalmente contra qualquer coisa que traga lemas positivistas como o lema 'ordem e progresso' expresso na bandeira; só reflete um conservadorismo do qual não fazemos parte" (HÉCATE, 2006). Interview available at: https://satanicdestructionzine.blogspot.com/2010/01/entrevista-miasthenia.html

[54] The term *araka'e* translates from the Guarani as "when".

> Projeções míticas de velhos inimigos
> Cicatrizes profundas
> Nas memórias de tempos ancestrais
> De sabedoria selvagem
> Que corre em minhas veias
> Memórias da resistência. (MIASTHENIA, 2017).

Although Miasthenia's lyrical narratives recurrently convey opposition to entrenched forms of religious assimilation, giving continuity to the Black Metal scenes's traditional anti-Christian discursive approach, they do so from a Feminist perspective on Indigenous resistance to colonial violence, which further emphasizes the band's rupture with patriarchal bents still prevalent within Metal music and society at large. To better illustrate, I quote, at length, Hécate's commentary on their 2017 album's title and overall concept:

> ANTÍPODAS é uma palavra usada para designar uma região que é diametralmente oposta a outra, significando 'o outro lado do mundo', neste caso, a América Antiga vista pelos colonizadores cristãos nos séculos XVI e XVII. Esse universo que lhes parecia estranho e desconhecido, retratado em antigos mapas e crônicas da época colonial, encontrava sentido nos mais antigos mitos e pesadelos dos invasores cristãos. Seres antípodas habitam esse imaginário, subvertendo e perturbando a norma, escapando assim à compreensão daqueles que os tentam dominar. Mulheres guerreiras - amazonas - coniupuyaras - são as heroínas dessa saga na defesa e honra do Eldorado, nosso mais antigo legado de resistência. O confronto e forte resistência dessas guerreiras, às tropas do conquistador Orellana em 1542 no rio Amazonas, ainda perturba a ordem histórica cristã e patriarcal imposta pelos colonizadores. Esse álbum traz uma poética histórica que rompe e resiste a essa ordem histórica, libertando o nosso passado, celebrando as memórias dissidentes de reinos malditos e o legado das amazonas. São memórias que celebram a existência de mundos e seres possíveis que persistem em continua rebelião contra o monoteísmo e a dominação imposta pelos invasores. Seres antípodas nos inspiraram essa poética de resistência na rota de expedições invasivas em busca do Eldorado. (HÉCATE, 2021).[55]

In their lyrics, Miasthenia's musical treatment of place follows a non-essentialist—and yet specific—translocal logic that inscribes different Indigenous communities in a history of shared struggles. Black metal's basic dichotomy of paganism X Christianity is complicated further by a series of considerations regarding gender, land, sovereignty, memory, and resistance. The melodic apparatuses are likewise complex: although Miasthenia maintains traditional elements of the black metal genre, they are enriched by the incorporation of folk elements, as well as occasional chants sung in Guaraní: "Ymaguare / Mbaraete / Iatã / Iko tema".[56]

[55] The text was originally presented in the CD booklet of *Antípodas* (2017); however, this version (expanded, and with slight variations) was posted by Susane Hécate on Miasthenia's official Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/miasthenia/posts/333386615017665

[56] "From ancient times / Powerful / Persisting / Living in Freedom" (*"*Ymaguare", MIASTHENIA, 2017).

Prominent examples of this (re)construction of place in translocal scenes are found in the genre known as Folk Metal, essentially constituted by the musical hybridization of Metal (most commonly in Extreme Metal forms) and folk instrumentation. Harris argues that this markedly hybrid music "has given scene members from across the world the ability to find a way to positively reconcile themselves with their location [while] 'subcultural capital' creates hierarchies of prestige within the scene that cut across the scenic hierarchies and inequalities" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2007, p. 118). Folk themes—whether musical or discursive—can refer to local or foreign milieu. Brazilian folk metal band Tuatha de Dannan, for instance, are famous for interweaving heavy metal with Irish and Celtic folk music, recurrently using the tin whistle, the banjo, and the fiddle. Folk metal's hybrid melodic attribute is oftentimes reflected in the lyrical content, with the addressing of folk themes: heavy metal's generic thematization of occultism, violence, and death, for instance, is here replaced by narratives of mythology and ancient history from the context of an artist's own native country, or even from afar. In some cases—as in the music of Tuatha de Dannan—both internal and external influences are merged. The band's lyrical content, though mostly based on Celtic folklore, also comprises sociopolitical commentary, especially in the later albums (reflecting the current catastrophic political climate in Brazil). Namely, the song "King" (from the 2020 album *In Nomine Éireann*) makes reference to the government's disastrous response in relation to the pandemic, among other alarming facets of today's conjuncture.

Thus, as a result of the increasing insecurity in socioeconomic and political dimensions—not only in Brazil, but across Latin America—, the treatment of locality in metal music stemming from the region has likewise been more conspicuous, addressing a range of contemporary issues, such as the consequences of neoliberal reforms and policies, environmental exploitation, as well as the aggravated oppression of marginalized/racialized groups. This is one of the reasons why Nelson Varas-Díaz inscribes such musical acts as eminent representatives in a tradition of transgressive metal from the Global South, where "scenes have developed distinct and yet unified histories, which have been curated both formally and informally by fans, musicians, and researchers" (VARAS-DÍAZ *et al*., 2020, p. 8). One of the major contributions that this brand of Metal has to offer, as part of the social fabric of Latin America, is a critical perspective—presented musically and extra-musically, on and off-stage by scene members—that acknowledges the patterns of continuity between the aforementioned contemporary social problems and what Varas-Díaz describes as a "long-

standing history of oppression that began with fifteenth-century colonialism and that has found creative and damaging ways to make its way into our present" (2020, p. 11).

In Brazil, there have emerged notable examples of this relatively new approach to metal music; Brazilian folk metal, more specifically, has seen an increasingly more complex incorporation of Indigenous elements, musically, aesthetically, and discursively. Bands such as Arandu Arakuaa, on the one hand, express their critical angle in regards to the country's sociopolitical situation, attending to local specificity; on the other, they also contribute to metal music translocality by escaping easy assumptions of nationalist essentialism, rearticulating the colonial past through a nuanced consideration of the shared oppressions currently faced by Indigenous peoples in Brazil and beyond.

3.6 Indigenous Metal – Enter Arandu Arakuaa

Hailing from the federal capital Brasília (like the aforementioned Miasthenia), the Brazilian Folk Metal output Arandu Arakuaa was formed in 2008 by Zândhio Huku, pioneering a major language shift—both musically and linguistically—in the national scene. Zândhio, who is Indigenous of the Krahô-Kanela ethnicity from his father's side, grew up in central Tocantins in close contact with surrounding Xerente and Krahô communities. In idealizing Arandu Arakuaa, shortly before his relocation to Brasília in 2006, the bandleader and main songwriter initially decided to compose lyrics in Old Tupí, and explains in an interview given to Studio A that the decision constitutes an attempt to invoke the "connection with Brazil",[57] established in colonial times; the Tupian language belongs to the Tupí–Guaraní family and was formalized in written form by the Spanish Jesuit priest José de Anchieta in 1595, which elucidates Zândhio's idea of using the language to represent the linguistic contact between the Indigenous peoples of the coast and the European colonizers. Hence, Arandu Arakuaa's eponymous debut EP, released in 2012, as well as their first full-length album, released in 2013 and entitled *Kó Yby Oré* (which translates as "This Land is Ours"), are ubiquitously written in Old Tupí. The most evident marker of this Tupí-Guaraní influence, however, appears in the band's name, allegedly taken from the book *A Terra dos Mil Povos:*

[57] HUKU, Zândhio. Arandu Arakuaa mistura heavy metal e música indígena. [Interview given to] Studio A. 2021. Available at: https://www12.senado.leg.br/tv/programas/estudio-a/2021/10/arandu-arakuaa-mistura-heavy-metal-e-musica-indigena. Accessed on: 22 jul. 2021.

História Indígena Brasileira Contada por um Índio, by the Brazilian Kayapó writer and activist Kaka Werá Jecupé:

> Grande parte da cultura dos povos nativos brasileiros traz em seus mitos, cerimônias e filosofias (ligadas à Tradição do Sonho, do Sol e da Lua) um conjunto de práticas e ensinamentos, que fizeram parte do Ciclo de Tupá. E foi no início desse ciclo que o Ayvu Rapyta foi disseminado entre os futuros Tupinambás e Tupy-Guaraní. Para entender o que é o ciclo de Tupã torna-se necessário saber que os anciões da raça vermelha detinham uma ciência, a que chamamos 'Arandu Arakuaa', que significa 'A Sabedoria dos Movimentos do Céu"', que trata da lei dos ciclos da Terra, do Céu e do Homem. (JECUPÉ, 1998, p. 20).[58]

In the aforementioned interview, Zândhio also speaks of his familiarization with other Indigenous languages, namely those belonging to the Macro-Jê family: his knowledge in Xerente was facilitated by his upbringing and experiences in nearness of their community, and upon his relocation to Brasília, he began engaging in the Xavante language through the help of a friend. As discussed further and in depth, Arandu Arakuaa's song lyrics, from their sophomore album to their present releases, are all enriched by these different Indigenous languages. Only one of their songs, entitled "Povo Vermelho"—the final track of the 2015 album *Wdê Nnãkrda*—was written in Portuguese. As Zândhio himself makes clear (HUKU, 2021), despite not being fluent in Xerente or Xavante, his continual studies and familiarization with their languages and cultures has prompted the writing of song lyrics for Arandu Arakuaa. The fundamental aspect of oral literature and speech in Indigenous traditions makes it so that further immersion (e.g. living in an Indigenous community) is generally necessary for acquiring fluency in their language. Still, when asked about the lyrics writing process, Zândhio explains that they are not idealized in Portuguese and that there is no actual translation involved (as was the case in the making of Sepultura's early albums, whose songwriting predominantly involved the translation from Portuguese into English by bandleader Max Cavalera, as previously discussed). In the music of Arandu Arakuaa, as demonstrated in the following section, the lyrical content emerges rather from Zândhio's own understanding of the interplay of Indigenous culture: his artistic expression is oftentimes informed by individual spiritual works. This kind of artistic praxis is especially meaningful not only for being uncommon in terms of songwriting in the Metal scene and beyond, but also because Zândhio's creative process is manifested through an virtually shamanic approach to musical theory and practice.

[58] JECUPÉ, Kuka Werá. A Terra dos Mil Povos: História Indígena Brasileira Contada por um Índio. São Paulo: Peirópolis, 1998.

Aside from the pioneering, predominant usage of Indigenous languages in their music, Arandu Arakuaa also represents a watershed in Brazilian folk metal due to the distinctive incorporation of regional (especially Northeastern) and Indigenous instruments that prevail in relation to the heavy metal component; this musical attribute constitutes in itself a priority shift, that is, a reversion in the hierarchical organization of traditional folk metal hybridity, which has been conventionally marked by the primacy of the "global", Western musical structure in relation to what can be considered a secondary and cosmetic implementation of local instrumentation.

Namely, Arandu Arakuaa was one of the founding groups of a Brazilian musical movement called Levante do Metal Nativo (or the 'Rise of Native Metal'), formed in 2015 in conjunction with other metal bands such as Voodoopriest, Aclla, and Armahda (all from the capital city of São Paulo), Hate Embrace and Cangaço (both from Recife, PE), MorrigaM (Macapá, AP), and Tamuya Thrash Tribe (Rio de Janeiro, RJ). Historian Natasha Bramorski describes the LMN as follows:

> uma busca pelo tipo de heavy metal que utilizam como base para a comunicação, já que canção é linguagem, e o movimento reivindica a criação de um novo subgênero dentro do universo ('guarda-chuva') do heavy metal.[…] Um movimento que se propõem a transformar em sonoridade as memórias nacionais e coletivas de comunidades específicas, manter vivas histórias/lendas e línguas que nunca aprendemos nas escolas. Buscam por testemunhas para que verdades sejam suas principais fontes, para que identidades sejam mantidas e valorizadas, ao mesmo tempo, em que transformam o seu próprio pertencimento no universo, e o heavy metal. (BRAMORSKI, 2017, p. 13-14).

As Bramorski argues, the LMN slogan "União de bandas brasileiras de metal que escrevem sobre o Brasil" foregrounds the notion of belonging to a place, a geographically established territory, with its own frontiers, cultures and laws, as well as emphasizes a "perspective from within" and the lived experiences from said territory (BRAMORSKI, 2017, p. 26). Naturally, though united in one movement, each band constituting the LMN presents its own musical treatment of place.

For instance, the female-fronted Death Metal output MorrigaM, despite the clear reference to the Celtic deity of war naming it, presents in their 2013 debut EP *Anhangá* lyrical content (sung in Portuguese) that predominantly addresses Tupí-Guaraní Indigenous folklore,[59] as illustrated in the title-track and in the song "Kuru'p'ir", both in reference to mythological protectors of the animals and the forests. The EP's final track, entitled

[59] "Criaturas e deuses pesquisados", Altar de Tupã. Available at: https://altardetupan.blogspot.com/2011/04/monstros-e-deuses-pesquisados.html

"Massacre", invokes Xandoré, the underworld god of hatred, as well as the god of night Guandirô, in a lyrical narrative of war that (un)coincidentally befits the Celtic deity herself: "O fogo tomou conta, que Xandoré cuide de você / O sol desapareceu, e Guandirô do seu anoitecer / Agora, aqui eu os amaldiçoo / Se quiserem ir, vão com o sangue do meu povo" (MORRIGAM, 2013). Folk elements are nearly absent musically, with a few exceptions containing local instrumentation (as illustrated in the introduction to "Corpo Seco", with the drums and electric guitars embodying percussive and melodic elements reminiscent of Northeastern *baião* music.

Another example is the heavy metal band Aclla, whose 2019 bilingual album *Pindorama* (released in Portuguese and English versions) presents lyrical content predominantly addressing (neo)colonial exploitation in the Brazilian context: "Da maré crescente, um perigo iminente / Veio Acabar com o que mais amamos / Trazendo doenças, deturpando crenças / Impondo o domínio de um Deus Tirano" (ACLLA, 2019, "Deus Trovão"); the incorporation of regional—especially Northeastern—melodic and rhythmic elements is present, although sparsely, in virtually every track of the album.

Hailing from Rio de Janeiro, the thrash metal act Tamuya Thrash Tribe, in spite of the lyrics predominantly sung in English, is consistent in their musical treatment of locality: through a critique of "a new kind of slavery", the listener is transported to scenarios past and present ("Senzala / Favela"), in intricate narratives of oppression undergone by peripheral and Indigenous communities. The musical hybridity of the album *The Last of the Guaranis* is also reinforced through the participation of artists from distinct music genres, such as rapper Marcelo D2—whose vocal lines create an interesting interplay between heavy metal and hip hop, as D2's agile rapping is done on top of heavily distorted guitars and aggressive drumming, as opposed to conventional DJing beats. The album also features MPB singer João Cavalcanti, Umbanda artist Gleyds Granden, as well as singing contributions by Coral de Crianças Guarani Mbya, for the opening track "Oreru Nhamandu Tupã Oreru", and Zahy Guajajara, who sings in the final track "Hàhé'm", in her native Guajajara language.[60]

Another important mention is the band Voodoopriest, who also play thrash metal, and address in their 2014 album *Mandu* the historical conflict (known as Revolta de Mandu Ladino) between Portuguese settlers and Tupí Indigenous groups led by Mandu Ladino,

[60] The album is available for listening through the following link (taken from the band's official YouTube channel): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5h94tVroZk

which took place in central Piauí from 1712 to 1719.[61] As a concept album, each track of *Mandu* constitutes a part of a lengthy thematization centered on the historical figure of Mandu Ladino, who learned the languages and culture of the non-Indigenous, as well as the arts, Portuguese language, and the usage of firearms, being able to organize a mutiny against the violence and invasion of religious settlers and farmers (BRAMORSKI, 2017, p. 31). Still, Indigenous references present in Voodoopriest's album (which is entirely sung in English) are manifested strictly in terms of lyrical content, as there are no elements of Indigenous or regional/traditional music in this case.

The same applies to the straightforward Death Metal of Hate Embrace, from Camaragibe, Pernambuco. Their 2014 concept album *Sertão Saga*, as the title suggests, constitutes a lengthy narrative, sung in Portuguese and divided in 10 tracks and 3 acts, whose milieu is the Brazilian semi-arid, Northeastern region known as *sertão*. The region's harsh weather and economic conditions are addressed in conjunction with the historical, cultural and folkloric richness that it encompasses, with references to important historical figures, such as Lampião and Virgulino: "Com arma engatilhada a ponto de dar disparo / De Virgulino a Lampião, sou o rei do cangaço / Nesta terra de sol quente, onde faço e desfaço / Onde há guerra anunciada, está o rei do cangaço" (HATE EMBRANCE, 2014, "Guerranunciada").

Independent band Cangaço hails from the same Northeastern State and plays the same Metal subgenre, also presenting lyrical content (sung in Portuguese and English) with a primary focus on Northeastern history, as demonstrated in their 2013 full-length album *Rastros.* Interestingly, the 2015 EP *Retalhado* constitutes a set of Death Metal cover versions of Northeastern classics by Nação Zumbi, Zé Ramalho, and Alceu Valença, as well as the previously mentioned song "Nothing to Say", by São Paulo heavy metal exponent Angra. Local instrumentation—e.g. Northeastern rhythms of *frevo* and *baião*—is incorporated, albeit sparsely, in songs such as the instrumentals "Atrito" and "Mental", as well as in "Encarnação", from the album *Rastros.*

Finally, the band Armahda, from São Paulo, presents lyrical content that encompasses Brazilian history more generally. Heavy metal's traditional thematization of war is used with a focus on Brazilian armed conflicts as source material for Armahda's eponymous 2013 debut album, such as the 1836 "Batalha do Seival", in the South of the country, and the famed

[61] BRITO, Karine. Revolta de Mandu Ladino. InfoEscola. 2016. Available at: https://www.infoescola.com/historia/revolta-de-mandu-ladino. Accessed on: 22 dec. 2021.

"Guerra de Canudos", in the North. As Bramorski puts forth, Armadah engages on historical debates and related research more directly: the band has, for instance, interviewed retired members of the Military who witnessed historical events (such as the explosions in Depósito Central de Material Bélico do Exército, in 1958, Deodoro, Rio de Janeiro), as well as heirs to the Brazilian Royal family (addressing their exile in 1889) (BRAMORSKI, 2017, p. 42). Musically, however, Armahda does not incorporate any elements that could convey a treatment of locality or "Brazilianness".

There are key factors that set Arandu Arakuaa apart from their fellow bands in the LMN. Lyrically, Arandu Arakuaa's incorporation of Indigenous languages is not only ubiquitous in virtually all of their songs, but it is also more resourceful for including Akwê Xerente and Xavante in addition to the more commonly used Tupí-Guaraní linguistic family. Musically, besides being the only folk metal band of the movement, Arandu Arakuaa also represent a multifaceted rupture with the subgenre's traditional hierarchical organization, mainly for prioritizing regional and Indigenous instrumentation in relation to the Metal component. Moreover, the band visually demonstrates—e.g. in live performances and music videos—their treatment of Indigenous culture through the consistent usage of body painting and other aesthetic apparatuses in reference to and informed by specific Indigenous communities. Lastly, Arandu Arakuaa's off-stage activism and engagement with Indigenous political agenda (see Chapter 5) is also illustrative of heavy metal music's potentiality to extrapolate individualist ideologies (as previously discussed in relation to the rise of Scandinavian Extreme Metal scenes, for instance) and intervene in broader sociopolitical agendas.

Hence, although Arandu Arakuaa differs, at many levels, from the other bands constituting the movement Levante do Metal Nativo, mainly in regards to their musical (re)construction of place and identity, these bands are still unified through crucial perspectives on Brazil's problematic socialization process, which for its part is rooted in the nation's colonial and modern history. As Bramorski argues,

> Como é um movimento que integra bandas tão distintas, o Nativo presente no nome do movimento não fica reduzido a apenas uma referência. Em algumas bandas os povos indígenas são os nativos, para outras, a população do sertão e interior do Brasil é que são brasileiros, pois surgem de miscigenações. O espirito do nativo é a resistência, e isso todos concordam. (BRAMORSKI, 2017, p. 59).

In regards to "resistance" in and through music, and before further addressing Arandu Arakuaa's complex musical hybridity, it is important to note that despite several line-up changes throughout their trajectory, they have invariably been a female-fronted band. Former frontwoman Nájila Cristina, whose vocal specialty leans towards Extreme Metal growling and screaming (like the aforementioned singer of Miasthenia, Susane Hécate), was the band's lead singer on the debut EP and the following two full-length albums. She was later replaced by Lis Carvalho, who sang and also played the *fife*—a transverse, high-pitched flute—on the 2018 album *Mrã Waze*. After a recent line-up change, Arandu Arakuaa hired Andressa Barbosa, their current singer, responsible for the vocals (whose crystal-clear timber is reminiscent of traditional Brazilian Popular Music) and the bass guitar on their latest release, the 2021 EP *Ainãka*. In being a thrice female-fronted Metal band, Arandu Arakuaa breaks with the genre's traditional, male-dominated power dynamics, which has awkwardly persisted since its formative years in the 1970s.

As a result of the aforementioned line-up alterations, Arandu Arakuaa has drastically adapted itself in terms of musical production and performance. Nowadays, aside from being a multiregional band, with some members living in different places across Brazil, each of Arandu Arakuaa's four musicians has assumed a multi-instrumentalist role in their live performances, recurrently playing a range of additional, regional instruments, especially percussive ones; Zândhio, whose vocal participation had previously consisted of Indigenous chants characterized by low-pitched clean singing, has assumed the Extreme Metal vocalizations as well, since former lead singer Nájila left the band and there was no other member to fulfill that specific role. Their current line-up consists of Zândhio Huku (guitars, viola caipira, Extreme vocals, keyboards, and traditional instruments), Andressa Barbosa (lead vocals and bass guitar), Guilherme Cezário (lead electric guitar), and João Mancha (drums, percussion, atabaque, berimbau).[62]

Arandu Arakuaa's exceptional musical hybridity is also embodied in Zândhio Huku's main instrument, which is itself a hybrid. The bandleader's custom-made, multiple-neck guitar includes two stringed instruments in the form of alternate necks: a regular 6-string electric guitar on the bottom, and a 10-string viola caipira for the top neck. The viola caipira is a predominant element in a range of Brazilian music forms, including samba, choro, maxixe, sertanejo, and Northeastern repente. It has a fundamental role in Arandu Arakuaa's signature

[62] Further information available at Encyclopaedia Metallum – The Metal Archives: https://www.metal-archives.com/bands/Arandu_Arakuaa/3540349161.

sound, as Zândhio's viola caipira melodic lines and solos take over—in terms of overall presence in the songs—in relation to the standard heavy metal, lead electric guitar solos. In the aforementioned interview, Zândhio comments that, throughout his musical trajectory, Indigenous and Northeastern regional music influences that have always marked his playing style were oftentimes frowned upon by fellow rock musicians, leading to difficulties in terms of musical communication; namely, in his upbringing, Zhândio was more familiarized with the viola caipira than with electric guitars. In folk metal hybridity, the artist found the liberty to express his cross-cultural aspirations.

On the whole, the musical appropriation carried out in the works of Arandu Arakuaa convey a key priority shift in the conventional hierarchical organization of folk metal's hybrid interplay. Indigenous and regional instruments assume here a protagonist—as opposed to secondary—musical role, which is not to say that local instrumentation *competes* with the basic heavy metal component; rather, in the music of Arandu Arakuaa, these diverse musical elements operate synergically.

In inverting the genre's traditional focus on the *Metal* in relation to the *Folk* (i.e. on Western, "global" musical apparatus in contrast to local instrumentation), Arandu Arakuaa's self-description as *Indigenous Metal* is not only appropriate, but further reinforced by the band's meticulous musical treatment of Indigenous culture and episteme, and by what can be considered a decolonial political perspective, manifested both musically and extra-musically, on and off-stage.

3.7 "This Land is Ours" – Arandu Arakuaa's Decolonial Musical Project

The previous two sections aimed at providing a brief mapping of Arandu Arakuaa's emergence, highlighting, on the one hand, how their music gives continuity to the relatively recent history of Brazilian Metal Music's (re)construction of locality, and on the other hand, the band's pioneering role in reshaping the genre locally, mainly through the ubiquitous and resourceful incorporation of different Indigenous languages in their music, and for prioritizing local instrumentation in contrast to the basic heavy metal apparatuses—a distinctive musical attribute even among the more locally-based Metal bands of Levante do Metal Nativo. This section aims at further investigating Arandu Arakuaa's music, focusing on narrative and melodic elements. As further discussed, the band has been actively involved in Indigenous

agenda, which brings one question, among many, to the fore: can Arandu Arakuaa's "Indigenous Metal" constitute a platform for decolonization?

Arandu Arakuaa's eponymous 2013 debut EP and their 2013 full-length release *Kó Yby Oré* were the first Brazilian Metal albums to be written predominantly in an Indigenous language (e.g. Old Tupi). Below, the cover arts of both albums are displayed alongside:

Fig. 2: Cover arts of the albums *Arandu Arakuaa* (2012) and *Kó Yby Oré* (2013). Source: Encyclopaedia Metallum (https://www.metal-archives.com).

An imagetic interplay unfolds as we compare both illustrations. The cover art of the 2012 debut EP depicts, in predominant shades of gray, a seemingly polluted metropolis that highly contrasts with the centered presence of a single, gigantic tree (displayed in vivid green, in similarity with Arandu Arakuaa's logo). Arguably, one of the symbolisms conveyed here refers to the *progress of decadence*—I deliberately reference the title of Overdose's iconic 1993 album, mentioned earlier in this chapter—, or the irony in a sprawling, yet dying and toxic metropolis, represented in opposition to the enduring presence of nature.

As we parallel this image to the cover art of the 2013 album *Kó Yby Oré,* whose title translates from the Tupi as "This Land is Ours", the imagetic contrast is further emphasized, as if we have just zoomed in on that isolated, yet reining natural presence. Colors now appear in abundance (the sky, literally a painting, bears the painted face of an Indigenous child); the river and woods below it compose the landscape to which an Indigenous man extends his

hand—"*kó yby oré*!". Nature appears to reclaim its presence here from an endeavor to reclaim and repatriate Native land, carried out by Indigenous hands.

Similarly, dispossession of land (a key issue of debate in Decolonial studies, as further discussed) is the central theme in the lyrical content of *Kó Yby Oré*'s 10th track, the heavy and versatile "A-î-Kuab R-asy", whose title in Tupí-Guaraní translates as "I Know the Pain". The song's opening verses address the colonial invasion of Brazil by the Portuguese Empire in 1500, as well as the resulting spread of violence, disease, and loss of territory suffered by the Native peoples: "I know the pain, I know of things / I know the pain of the Indigenous without a home / White men came with their wars / White men came with their diseases"[63] (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013).[64] The narrative content of the track's introduction is matched musically as Arandu Arakuaa essentially performs, here, the subgenre Doom Metal, a style pioneered by the aforementioned Black Sabbath, marked by its slow-paced, yet heavy sound, and whose conventional lyrical content includes the thematization of decay, death and depression; moreover, this subgenre, like all those figuring in the Extreme Metal category, traditionally incorporates growled and/or screamed vocals, as demonstrated, in this case, by the initial lines performed by Nájila Cristina. The instrumental structure of "A-î-Kuab R-asy" (e.g. drums, electric and bass guitars) soon shifts into a fast-paced heavy metal approach, befitting the violent setting depicted in the following verses: "Fire on the fallen earth / Blood on the fallen earth / The sad day has come / The sad day for the Indigenous",[65] which are now sung in a clean, yet melancholic timbre. The transformation depicted musically (with the shift from Doom to Heavy Metal) and lyrically (narrating the devastation of Native land and natural resources after the colonial encounter) is how the song transits, through the musical language, towards the contemporary (neo)colonial violence:

> A saddened heart borne in my chest
> My heart was burnt
> A saddened chest they have jabbed
> They have jabbed the wound
> I am the Indigenous without a home
> I am the Indigenous without a village
> They have slain mother earth

[63] A-î-kuab r-asy a-î-kuab mba'e - / A-î-kuab r-asy xe abá-ere'oka / Karaíba o-ikó ir~unamo I marana / Karaíba o-ikó ir~unamo I mba'easy.

[64] The lyrics of all the songs by Arandu Arakuaa analyzed in this dissertation have been freely translated into English by me, at times more literally, and at other times following a creative approach to rhyme schemes (when these are notable in the original Native languages). My exercise, for its part, consisted of using the original translations (e.g. from Indigenous languages such Old Tupi, Akwẽ Xerente and Xavante into Portuguese) provided by bandleader Zândhio Huku in the CD booklets. Original translations that are not included in the official booklets were sent to me by Zândhio himself.

[65] "T-atá ibiara-pe / T-ugûy ibiara-pe / 'Ara aruru o-syk / 'Ara aruru abá-supé".

> They have slain my soul
> I lament - it is hard
> My way is hard
> My way is hard, I Am
> I am the Indigenous without a name (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013). [66]

The Extreme Metal vocalization is rescued during these verses, however, the instrumentation becomes a synthesis of the early, lethargic Doom Metal and the subsequent, aggressive Heavy Metal approaches, giving rise to a mid-paced, heavily distorted groovy metal sound. This musical synthesis operates in congruence with the verses, constituting a sonic narrativization of Coloniality.

A decolonial perspective of this key-concept, as put forth by Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano, foregrounds the notion of continuity between the violent effects—physical, cultural, economic, and epistemological—of early Colonialism and subsequent (Modern) forms of Western domination:

> In Latin America, the cultural repression and the colonization of the imaginary were accompanied by a massive and gigantic extermination of the natives, mainly by their use as expendable labor force, in addition to the violence of the conquest and the diseases brought by Europeans. […] Coloniality, then, is still the most general form of domination in the world today, once colonialism as an explicit political order was destroyed. It doesn't exhaust, obviously, the conditions nor the modes of exploitation and domination between peoples. But it hasn't ceased to be, for 500 years, their main framework. (QUIJANO, 2010, p. 23-24).

Curiously, of all the songs from the album *Kó Yby Oré*, "A-î-Kuab R-asy" is the only one that lacks any form of markedly local (e.g. regional or Indigenous) instrumentation, which befits its lyrical thematization of Coloniality, mainly in terms of the loss of land and the erasure of culture and identity undergone by Indigenous communities, as conveyed in the verses: "I am the Indigenous without a home / I am the Indigenous without a village / […] I am the Indigenous without a name" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013). In Brazil, the politics of demarcation of Indigenous land, which have historically been limited (if not thoroughly neglected by the State), now continue to be further crippled and threatened by juristic theses. Namely, the ongoing legal proposition of "Marco Temporal", or Time Frame, follows an essentially ruralist logic aimed at restricting the rights to land of Indigenous groups by stipulating that only the territories that had been possessed by the time of promulgation of the

[66] "Moti'a aruru xe py'a / Xe py'a a-kaî / Moti'a araru oi-kutuk / Oi-kutuk pereba / Xe abá-ere'oka xe / Xe abá-ere'taba / O-î- îuká yby sy / O-î-îuká xe 'anga /A-îe-apirõI abaíb / Abaíb xe r-apé - / Abaíb xe r-apé xe / Xe abá-ere'yma" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013).

1988 Constitution should be opt for demarcation.[67] According to the data presented in Diário Oficial da União (DOU), only 13.8% (below the world average of 15%) of the Brazilian territory is "occupied" by Indigenous territory, while private areas account for 41%, 22% for pasture—half of which has been severely degraded—and 8% with agriculture (apud GUAJAJARA, 2021).

As Kaka Werá Jecupé discusses in regards to Indigenous traditions in Brazil dating back to colonial times, different tribes have engaged, each in their own way, with the spiritual dimensions of nature, cultivating a sensitivity to feel, contact and interact with the energies of the earth, respecting it as a deity on its own (JECUPÉ, 1998, p.28). On a similar vein, towards the end of the aforementioned interview to Studio A,[68] Arandu Arakuaa's main songwriter Zândhio Kuku puts forward that, for Indigenous communities of today, nature continues to encompass a myriad of existential aspects, including spirituality: when you destroy rivers and forests, you are destroying spirituality as well (HUKU, 2021). Their arguments bring to the fore a key decolonial perspective: Indigenous rights to land extrapolate the delimitation of physical borders, access to natural resources, and subsistence; rather, the politics of demarcation of Native land impacts, either individually or collectively, on Indigenous subjectivity, cosmology, culture and knowledge. As I have suggested, the song "A-î-Kuab R-asy" resonates with such perspective on at least two levels: lyrically (with the narrativization of past and present colonial violence undergone by Indigenous peoples in Brazil, and the resulting systematic erasure of Indigenous cultures and identities) and musically (e.g. the song markedly lacks any form of Indigenous instrumentation, in contrast to the rest of the *Kó Yby Oré* album—this musical attribute conveys a sense of loss that is further emphasized through the incorporation of a lethargic, depressive Doom Metal atmosphere at the beginning of the track).

Similarly, as illustrated in the verses "A saddened chest they have jabbed / They have jabbed the *wound* / I am the Indigenous without a home" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013, emphasis added), the vocabulary of the song lyrics leans towards decolonial thinking. As proposed by Walter Mignolo,

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[67] GUAJAJARA, Sonia; TERENA, Eloy. Terras Indígenas não comprometem áreas disponíveis e produção agropecuária. El País, Madrid, 25 de ago. de 2021. Avaiable at: https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2021-08-25/terras-indigenas-nao-comprometem-areas-disponiveis-e-producao-agropecuaria.html . Accessed on: 20 dec. 2021.

[68] HUKU, Zândhio. Arandu Arakuaa mistura heavy metal e música indígena. [Interview given to] Studio A. 2021. Available at: https://www12.senado.leg.br/tv/programas/estudio-a/2021/10/arandu-arakuaa-mistura-heavy-metal-e-musica-indigena. Accessed on: 22 jul. 2021

> The dislocation of 'mestizo consciousness' lived and experienced in the critical awareness of people of European descent has something in common with the dislocation of Indigenous and Afro dislocated consciousness also in America. If the awareness of being of European descent, and therefore not of African or of Original (that is Ab-Original) descent, is the awareness of a dislocation of a 'mestizo consciousness', that consciousness has something in common with W.E. B. Du Bois double consciousness or Gloria Anzaldúa mestiza consciousness. What they have in common is the *colonial wound*; a sense of the modern/colonial fracture; of the modern/colonial racial displacement. Certainly, there is a question of scale, and the colonial wound in an Argentine of European descent is not the same as the colonial wound of an Aymara of ab-original descent. (MIGNOLO, 2007, p. 24, emphasis added).

Mignolo's conceptualization of the colonial wound is important not only for addressing the Latin American context of over five hundred years of imperial/colonial domination (overlapping with Modernity and the evolution of Western capitalism), but also for highlighting shared racial struggles that bring together critical perspectives on coloniality, such as W.E.B. Du Bois's *double consciousness* and Gloria Anzaldúa's *mestiza consciousness* (further discussed in the following chapter); elsewhere,[69] Mignolo also invokes Frantz Fanon's *Les Damnés de la Terre* (1963), stressing that the wretched of the Earth are defined by the "colonial wound, physical and/or psychological, [as] a consequence of racism, the hegemonic discourse that questions the humanity of all those who do not belong to the locus of enunciation (and the geo-politics of knowledge)" (MIGNOLO, 2005, p. 8). However, Mignolo's consideration of the colonial wound as a sense of the modern/colonial fracture and of modern/colonial racial displacement also accounts for the specific conditions of racialized subjects in different places.

In Brazil, for instance, aside from the histories of colonial violence undergone by Black and Indigenous peoples, the dynamics of internal colonialism—or what Mignolo calls a perspective *from coloniality,* emerging out of a "feeling of inferiority imposed on human beings who do not fit the predetermined model in Euro-American narrative" (MIGNOLO, 2005, p. xii)—are complicated further by the racial and social displacement suffered by inhabitants and migrants from the Northeastern region of the country; although these migrant workers have provided a massive stream of labor for the Southeastern industry since the early 1950s,[70] namely laying the groundwork for Sao Paulo's economic development, they have

[69] "Coloniality names the experiences and views of the world and history of those whom Fanon called les damnés de la terre ('the wretched of the earth', those who have been, and continue to be, subjected to the standards of modernity)". MIGNOLO, Walter. The Idea of Latin America, Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

[70] CAMARGO, José Marangoni. A expansão da agroindústria sucroalcooleira em São Paulo e seus efeitos sobre o emprego e o meio ambiente. *In*: SIMONETTI, Mirian C. L. (Org.). A (in)sustentabilidade do desenvolvimento: meio ambiente, agronegócio e movimentos sociais. São Paulo: Cultura acadêmica; Marília (Oficina Universitária), 2011.

also been systematically prejudiced—and Black Brazilians are largely concentrated in the Northern and Northeastern regions of the country.[71]

The Northeastern history of migration to São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Brasilia is connected not only to the constitution of a substantial workforce in those cities and their satellite regions, but also to the first generation of contemporary *periferia* (as discussed in Chapter 2) and to the development of music movements such as Brazilian hip hop; similarly, it is not surprising that the Metal bands constituting the movement Levante do Metal Nativo prioritize, as pointed out in the previous section, Northeastern music, history and culture, alongside their references to Indigenous and Afro-Brazilian traditions. Arandu Arakuaa's musical trajectory presents an increasing incorporation of regional instrumentation through a range of traditional musical apparatuses—Zândhio Huku's hybrid guitar is but one marker of his *viola caipira* (also called *viola Nordestina*) musical background as he grew up in the Northern State of Tocantins.

In relation to the *Kó Yby Oré* album, and more generally, to Arandu Arakuaa's entire musical discography—marked by the prominence of Indigenous and regional musical elements—the song "A-î-Kuab R-asy" is an oddity: potential musical meanings emerge precisely from the absence of the aforementioned elements; from silence that makes itself be heard as the result of silencing. When Mignolo argues that Fanon experienced the colonial wound as "suffocation" (2005, p. 74),[72] he is speaking of a similar silencing, resulting from the erasure enacted on the *wretched*, racialized subject by the European colonial expansion and the lasting, wide-ranging hegemonic Western system of beliefs. In arguing that "A-î-Kuab R-asy" constitutes a musical and narrative treatment of a similar colonial wound, I am however not suggesting that the predominant heavy metal component of this song "suffocates" the Indigenous and regional elements that a familiarized listener would expect to hear—the hybrid music interplay discussed here is more complicated than that; it is not

[71] "Black Brazilians are not only ill-represented in politics and privileged social positions (such as among medical and dental professionals, but are also more likely to be poor and live in impoverished regions of the country, compared to their privileged white counterparts. Existing evidence also points to prevailing healthcare inequities. [...] Black Brazilians are largely concentrated in Northern and Northeastern regions of the country, which are notoriously known for their lower levels of healthcare availability".
CONSTANTE, Helena M; MARINHO, Gerson L.; & BASTOS, João L. The door is open, but not everyone may enter: racial inequities in healthcare access across three Brazilian surveys. Ciência & Saúde Coletiva, 26-09, 2021. Avaiable at: https://www.scielosp.org/article/csc/2021.v26n9/3981-3990. Accessed on 17 dec. 2021.

[72] "Fanon observed: 'It is not because the Indo-Chinese has discovered a culture of his own that he is in revolt. It is because 'quite simply' it was, in more than one way, becoming impossible for him to breathe" (Frantz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks [1952], trans. Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove Press, 1967, p. 226.

merely a competition between "global", Western heavy metal apparatuses and those of local instrumentation. As discussed towards the end of the previous section, Arandu Arakuaa's Indigenous Metal involves a synergic dynamics between these distinct musical elements, even when one predominates over the other. Although this predomination is crucially *marked* (under the light of the band's signature sound and the song's lyrical content), it is not, however, free of tension. Tension is welcome here; it is heavy metal's domain and it is the essence of opposition, resistance and transformation through what María Lugones (2005) calls "active subjectivity"[73] (further discussed in the following chapter), just as it also imbues the modern/colonial fracture.

The idea of opposition is precisely the lyrical focus of the following track in the album's list, the intricate and aggressive "Kaapora". As evidenced in its title, the song makes reference to the Tupí-Guaraní mythological deity whose name translates as 'dweller of the woods',[74] and who is often portrayed as a naked, feral and agile Indigenous person bearing a spear and riding on the back of a boar. Kaapora is a key figure in Indigenous/Brazilian folklore, known as the guardian of the forests and animals; however, *he* or *she* is portrayed differently across different regions of the country—in one of these versions, Kaapora is a cannibal who slays and feeds on hunters and invaders.[75] The song's introduction is marked by a tribal *atabaque* drumming and the rattling *maracá*, played in a swift rhythm and giving rise to an ominous atmosphere of impending danger. This local instrumentation is soon joined by heavily distorted electric guitars, before subsiding into a calm, viola caipira-based melody. These musical shifts are all carried out in less than 18 seconds, and the song is suddenly reshaped into a complex form of Extreme Metal. Growling vocals, drums, electric guitars and bass recurrently overlap while following diverse changes in time-signature. This rhythmic attribute challenges heavy metal's conventional focus on 4/4 time, and leans towards the subgenre known as Progressive Metal (famously represented by bands such as Rush, Dream Theater, and Opeth), marked by odd time-signatures, musical virtuosity and intense experimentation.

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[73] LUGONES, María. From Within Germinative Stasis: Creating Active Subjectivity, Resistant Agency. *In:* EntreMundos/AmongWorlds. Palgrave Macmillan US, 2005.

[74] BENATTE, Antonio Paulo. A trilha do caipora. Revista de História. Rio de Janeiro, 2010.

[75] FREITAS, A.C.; CARDOSO, I.S.; JOÃO, M.C.A.; KRIEGLER, N. & PINHEIRO, M. Lendas, misticismo e crendices populares sobre manguezais, Cap. 5: p. 144-165. *In*: Pinheiro, M.A.A. & Talamoni, A.C.B. (Org.). Educação Ambiental sobre Manguezais. São Vicente: UNESP, Instituto de Biociências, Câmpus do Litoral Paulista, 2018.

Although the Folk/Indigenous Metal of Arandu Arakuaa inherently presents a degree of musical experimentation due to its hybrid interplay, the song "Kaapora" takes it to a different level—it may sound odd for listeners who are new to the Extreme/Progressive Metal genre. The recurrent rhythmic changes, overdriven guitars, and the harsh vocals appear to operate here as a musical treatment of Kaapora's monstrosity in the eyes of the invaders. In his analysis of Extreme Metal music, Rodrigo Barchi calls these radical, *monstrous* musical forms "Lycanthropic and Infernal ecologies" (BARCHI, 2016, p. 209). The author highlights that the sense of opposition and insurrection constructed musically and narratively in diverse Extreme Metal forms is potentially educational due to the political strength present in them—their discursive and sonic shocking apparatuses constitute an (anti)musical movement (p. 2010). Focusing on the song "Kaapora", Barchi discusses:

> Caapora como o ser amorfo, monstruoso e terrível, que por um lado impedirá que as florestas sejam destruídas e que os animais sejam dizimados e, por outro, promoverá, à base de um furtivo e aterrorizante encontro, o medo e a fuga dos inimigos da natureza. O Caapora, que de uma só vez ensina que não é para entrar em seus domínios e muito menos atacar os seus protegidos. Que em sua forma aterradora está a força que promoverá a resistência necessária na defesa da mata. Que na sua horripilante aparição denuncia um extermínio, o qual, se depender dele, jamais será levado adiante. (BARCHI, 2016, p. 289).

Barchi's description of the deity Kaapora as an amorphous, monstrous and terrible being are echoed musically in the song, with its shape-shifting rhythmic structure, as well as its aggressive Extreme Metal vocalizations, massively distorted guitars, and roaring drumming. The song lyrics emphasize this violent musical attribute: "Men who kill jaguars; Men who kill tapirs / Men who kill capybaras; Men who kill the trapped / Men scream and flee; Men flee, scared / Men—Kaapora traps them; Men—Kaapora *makes them disappear*" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013, emphasis added).[76] The choice of words in Arandu Arakuaa's reading of the Indigenous deity is ambiguous. Although the song narrates the fleeing of invaders as they encounter the frightening Kaapora, some of them end up being trapped, and then Kaapora *makes them disappear.* It is unclear whether or not those men managed to escape their entrapment; however, the stanza is markedly repetitive from beginning to end, and the latter verses seem to respond to the initial ones. Is it possible that the dweller of the woods gave those men—'men who kill the trapped'—the same treatment they had given the

[76] Abá o-îuká îagûara /Abá o-îuká tapi'ira
Abá o-îuká kapibara /Abá o-îuká o-moîar
Abá o-asem o-îabab /Abá o-îabab o- mosykyîé
Abá kaapora o-moîar /Abá kaapora a-î-mokanhem.
(ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2013).

animals of the forest? We do not know; however, the aforementioned portrayal of Kaapora as a cannibal gives the disappearance of those men a whole new meaning.

Musically, the "Kaapora" is similar to "A-î-Kuab R-asy" in the sense that they are the heaviest songs (i.e. the heavy metal component predominates in relation to local instrumentation) in the 2013 release. *Kó Yby Oré* was Arandu Arakuaa's debut full-length album; arguably, the band's hybrid interplay—or their signature Indigenous Metal sound—was not yet fully developed, for the following releases (which include two other full-length albums, one split album, and one EP) increasingly presented a shift in the hierarchical organization of conventional Folk Metal hybridity.

Namely, their 2015 album *Wdê Nnãkrda*, which translates from the Akwẽ Xerente Native language as "tree trunk", constitutes a step forward in Arandu Arakuaa's musical treatment of Indigenous cultures, with the incorporation of song lyrics in different languages (four in Akwẽ Xerente, three in Old Tupi, two in Xavante, and one in Portuguese), as well as an array of Indigenous and regional musical apparatuses. The cover art of *Wdê Nnãkrda*, shown next, was designed by the sisters Natalie and Bianca Duarte:

Fig. 3: Cover art of the album *Wdê Nnãkrda* (2015). Source: Encyclopaedia Metallum (https://www.metal-archives.com)

The illustration presents, instead of the tree trunk suggested by the album's title, an Indigenous woman whose painted body is connected to the soil through dark roots along her legs. Arguably, the symbolic *woman—tree* relation works in reference to the role of Indigenous women—as represented, for instance, by aforementioned environmentalist and politician Sônia Guajajara—whose important activism in Indigenous agenda has nourished and been the basis of multiple changes in the context of Brazil's disturbing socio-political conjuncture, more specifically in relation to the precarious politics of demarcation of Native land. As discussed in the final chapter, Arandu Arakuaa, who recently participated in 2ª Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas, have been actively engaged in their cause.

Wdê Nnãkrda's introductory song, entitled "Watô Akwẽ" (from the Akwẽ Xerente "I am Indigenous") operates, musically, in the opposite direction of the Metal-based songs by Arandu Arakuaa addressed so far. While heavy metal elements are ubiquitous both in "A-î-Kuab R-asy" and "Kaapora", they are thoroughly cast aside in "Watô Akwẽ"—it is, as its title suggests, essentially an Indigenous hymn. The song opens with the sole sound of a foot rattle (chocalho de pé) that is soon joined by an Indigenous choir, as well as the Enawenê Nawê low-flute played by Zândhio Huku. A gradual incorporation of whistles and atabaque drumming, in increasing volume, reinforces this crescendo, until Zândhio's Indigenous chant and foot rattle take over. The chant invokes different Xerente clans ("Watô Wahirê / Watô Krozake / Watô Krãiprehi / Watô Kuzâ / Watô Kbazi / Watô Krito") in a call for Indigenous solidarity, and its verses are intercalated with the response of the choir and the atabaque, in a ritual fashion that extends itself throughout the first minute of the song. Then, Zândhio's solo part incorporates a clean viola caipira melody along with high flute notes, as he sings:

> *Watô akw~e* – I'm Indigenous
> *Tâkãhã tka tô wanõrtê* – This land belongs to us
> *Watô tkaitdêkwa* – I'm a child of the Earth
> *Watô wdê zaure kmãdkâkwa* – Guarding trees of great girth.[77]

In these verses, Arandu Arakuaa once again bring to the fore the crucial role of land in their decolonial musical critique: Indigenous identity is approached here as intrinsically connected to location, and belonging. The lyrical content also emphasizes the importance of more responsible, inclusive, and ecologically sound politics of demarcation of Indigenous territory, as environmental protection in Brazil has been majorly practiced by Indigenous communities, albeit being a matter of translocal concern, with implications on national and

[77] ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2015; my English translation, from Zândhio Huku's translation in Portuguese of the original Akwẽ Xerente lyrics.

global scales. After the aforementioned verses are sung, as if mirroring this expansive idea, the song proceeds in a ritualistic repetition of the lyrics up to this point, however, the instrumental elements that had been so far intercalated now overlap and unite in melodic harmony.

This call for translocal solidarity is reinforced, for instance, in the album's final track, the versatile "Povo Vermelho". The song's melodic apparatuses constitute a synthesis of the heavier songs addressed earlier in this section ("A-î-Kuab R-asy" and "Kaapora") and the predominant local/Indigenous instrumentation and chants of the latter ("Watô Akwẽ"). It opens with a long, mid-tempo, riff-based, groovy metal instrumental section, and suddenly shifts into a cheerful melody carried out by Nájila Cristina's clean vocals and Zândhio Huku's viola capiria. Arandu Arakuaa's markedly hybrid sound signature is emphasized here with the intercalated incorporation of Indigenous choirs and rattling *maracás* alongside overdriven electric guitars and powerful drumming. The up-beat and cheerful attribute of the song's initial sections is mirrored in its celebratory lyrical content, as illustrated in the following verses: "A terra tudo oferecia, Era festa todo dia / *Hu ha hu ha hi* (3x) / Homem e mulher dançando, Criança brincando / Ancião contando história - Cantoria e alegria" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2015). However, this melodic flow soon collapses into a gloomy atmosphere, marked by the withdrawal of percussion instruments. Nájila's clean singing now gives way to numerous juxtaposed, ethereal whispers and non-melodic voices, as she speaks (rather than sings) the lines: "Minha casa era grande, muitas pessoas / Tocar maracá fazia planta nova crescer / Homem branco chegou e atirou / Muito chumbo no meu pov*o*" (2015). The colonial violence invoked in the verses is also addressed melodically through Zândhio's acoustic guitar arrangements, as major chords, predominant up to this section, are replaced by non-diatonic minor chords—that is, not native to the song's key. Finally, the somber tone of the song is broken by an Extreme Metal incarnation: acoustic viola caipira lines give way to heavily distorted electric guitars, and Nájila's part becomes an aggressive, growling vocalization of the verses:

> Alguns de nós fugimos, escondemos na mata
> Lutamos até hoje, lutamos até hoje
> O povo vermelho resiste, o povo vermelho resiste
> Enquanto houver terra, enquanto houver mata […]
> Os monstros do progresso continuaram a matar
> Com armas, doenças, pregando sua fé
> Ganância e ignorância comandam seus corações
> Matavam nossos homens, roubavam nosso saber
> Entraram para história como heróis […]
> O povo vermelho resiste, o povo vermelho resiste
> Enquanto houver espirito, enquanto houver sangue. (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2015).

In the aforementioned lines of "Povo Vermelho", Coloniality is once again foregrounded with the addressing of the ongoing operation of the Modern/Colonial project. As Quijano argues, this matrix of power, of which Western leaders (e.g. Europeans and their Euro-North American posterities who, as the song reminds us, have gone down in history as 'heroes') are still the main beneficiaries, operates in a global scale. In Brazil, more specifically, the lines of (neo)colonial exploitation are observed mainly in the context of Indigenous and Black populations—albeit also involving other marginalized groups—, as the majority of "the dominated, the discriminated against, are precisely the members of the 'races', 'ethnies', or 'nations' into which the colonized populations were categorized in the formative process of that world power, from the conquest of America and onward" (QUIJANO, 2010, p. 23). Moreover, the Coloniality of power works in distinct yet interconnected facets of cultural and economic domination, some of which are tackled in "Povo Vermelho", including the physical and epistemic violence (e.g. "Matavam nossos homens, roubavam nosso saber"), as well as the appropriation of land and control of natural resources under the capitalist banner of 'progress' ("Enquanto houver terra, enquanto houver mata […], Os monstros do progresso continuaram a matar"). Although the power relations interwoven in the operation of this (neo)colonial matrix also involve other key domains, such as the control of authority (State and military establishments), the control of gender and sexuality (family, relationships, and education) and the control of knowledge (epistemology, religion, and formation of subjectivity),[78] the focus of several decolonial thinkers and Indigenous intellectuals is on the issue of land appropriation, as a myriad forms of violence stemming from colonial structuring are rooted to it.

Namely, Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, in their co-written article "Decolonization is not a metaphor" (2012), put forth that

> Within settler colonialism, the most important concern is land/water/air/subterranean earth (land, for shorthand, in this article.) Land is what is most valuable, contested, required. This is both because the settlers make Indigenous land their new home and source of capital, and also because the disruption of Indigenous relationships to land represents a profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence. This violence is not temporally contained in the arrival of the settler but is reasserted each day of occupation. (TUCK & YANG, 2012, p. 5).

In using the term "settler colonialism", the authors refer to a form of colonialism in which settlers come to stay, establishing sovereignty through appropriation of land. Whereas Indigenous relationships to land are generally more than territorial and subsistential, but

[78] MIGNOLO, Walter. Globalization and the decolonial option. New York: Routledge. 2010.

mainly epistemological, ontological, and cosmological, settler colonialism reshapes land into property, resource and capital. Similarly, and in continuity with settler colonial contexts defined by "the subjugation and forced labor of chattel slaves, whose bodies and lives become the property" (TUCK & YANG, 2012, p. 6), land appropriation has become the root of labor exploitation in many nation-states today. For instance, approaching the Brazilian context and centering on the experiences of an urban Indigenous group (Aldeia Maracanã) and an urban Afro-descendant quilombo (Sacopã) in Rio de Janeiro, Desirée Poets reminds us that Black and Indigenous peoples in Brazil have historically undergone processes of elimination, dispossession, labor exploitation, and exclusion (racism) (POETS, 2020).[79]

These dire consequences of ongoing, (neo)colonial violence that is rooted in massive appropriation of land—after all, all land in Brazil is Native land—are the reasons why Tuck and Yang put forth that the term decolonization should not be *metaphorized*. Namely, the common, easy adoption of (educational and academic) discourse evidenced by the increasing number of calls to "decolonize our schools," or use "decolonizing methods," or "decolonize student thinking" prevail in contrast to debates on the struggle for the recognition of Indigenous sovereignty, "or the contributions of Indigenous intellectuals and activists to theories and frameworks of decolonization" (TUCK & YANG, 2012, p. 2-3). The authors understand the easy adoption of decolonizing discourse as stemming from a series of *settler moves to innocence*, discussed at length in their article, but that in general constitute strategies and attempts at alleviating the anxiety of settler un-belonging caused by the resisting presence of Indigenous peoples, who make *a priori* claims to land and ways of being—a "constant reminder that the settler colonial project is incomplete" ([Fanon, 1963; Vine Deloria, 1988; Grande, 2004; Bruyneel, 2007] p. 9). Finally, Tuck and Yang stress that decolonization is not a generic term in the broad umbrellas of social justice and philanthropy against oppressive conditions; rather, "decolonization specifically requires the repatriation of Indigenous land and life" (2012, p. 21).

Tuck and Yang's focus on the issue of land appropriation should not, however, be mistaken for a disregard for other interconnected domains of the (neo)colonial apparatus. The authors put forward that decolonization needs to be thought through in particularities of sexuality, legality, raciality, language, religion and property (2012, p. 21). These aspects of human life, it is important to note, have been historically subjected to the dynamics of

[79] POETS, Desirée. Settler colonialism and/in (urban) Brazil: black and indigenous resistances to the logic of elimination. *In*: *Settler Colonial Studies*, v. 11, n. 3, 2021.

impositions (e.g. Western capitalist paradigms of heterosexuality, normalcy, universality, whiteness, nationality, Christianity and prosperity) of settler colonialism and of the modern/colonial system. As discussed previously, in Indigenous contexts, land encompasses a series of cultural, ontological, cosmological and epistemic implications, which leads us to understand that Tuck and Yang's focus on the need for repatriation of Indigenous land and life stems from a fundamentally decolonial perspective.

On a similar vein, some of the implications of land appropriation in the Brazilian Indigenous context are brought to the fore towards the end of Arandu Arakuaa's "Povo Vermelho". The song's hybrid interplay of Indigenous/regional and Metal musical elements, previously discussed, culminates in an apparent ending at exactly four minutes in. However, as all Metal apparatuses (Extreme vocalization, electric guitars, bass and drums) finally fade out, the song transits into an atmospheric, minimalistic and serious conclusion, consisting solely of bandleader Zândhio Huku's driving foot rhythm, the rattling maracá, and Indigenous chant, singing, in a shamanic low voice, the verses:

> Tem que contar história pra criança aprender
> Tem que falar a língua pra cultura não morrer
> Somos filhos da lua e do sol, a mata é nosso lar
> Viemos da terra e pra a terra ei de voltar
> Tem que tocar maracá pra cultura não morrer
> Tem que ter mata virgem pro espirito proteger. (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2015).

Each line addresses, respectively, the epistemic, linguistic, cosmological, and cultural interconnected facets of Indigenous relationship to land. Interestingly, although "Povo Vermelho" is Arandu Arakuaa's only song written in Portuguese, it highlights the importance of keeping Native languages alive, as discussed in the article by Tuck and Yang (2012). It is likewise relevant to note that during the United Nations's event for the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues expressed concern that 40% of the world's estimated 6,700 languages were in danger of disappearing—the majority belonging to Indigenous peoples, and as the President of the General Assembly Tijjani Muhammad-Bande pointed out, one Indigenous language becomes extinct every two weeks.[80]

As demonstrated throughout this section, Arandu Arakuaa's music (with song lyrics in Tupi, Akwẽ Xerente and Xavante) assumes a crucial role—aside from the recovery of historical memory for addressing coloniality—in supporting, promoting, and preserving

[80] Further information available at the UN Official Website: https://news.un.org/pt/story/2019/12/1698211.

Native languages at a translocal level, as these languages belong to different Indigenous peoples in Brazil and beyond (e.g. Guaraní is an official language in Paraguay). Furthermore, their culturally informed usage of Indigenous languages operates in denouncing problematic nationalist paradigms that have infiltrated an array of music genres nationally and globally. In the context of Brazilian heavy metal, for instance, music that is sung in Portuguese as opposed to English has been widely considered more genuine, 'native', and authentic, in disregard of the fact that in the context of the American continent, both of them are languages of colonizers. In effect, these and a series of other nationalist assumptions have inherited from Modernity an articulation of Europe as an ever-present, 'normal' and universal referential, whereas Native languages and cultures are often strategically severed from today's temporal and spatial axes, and fixed in the colonial past.

In making visible otherwise hidden, oppressive strategies and practices of exclusion and erasure in which the marginalization of Indigenous and other racialized groups has been rooted (considering the colonial histories in the Americas), the discursive practice in the Metal music of artists such as Arandu Arakuaa, along with their off-stage activism, potentially becomes an apparatus of decolonization, which Nelson Varas-Díaz calls "extreme decolonial dialogues":

> *extreme decolonial dialogues* have become an important driving principle behind many metal musicians in the Latin American region. These dialogues have yielded into existence artifacts [such as] 'decolonial metal'. These include, but are not limited to the following: (1) metal's concern with a historically anchored reflection on oppression; (2) the regionalization of its content, sounds, and imagery; (3) its use as an intervention strategy in many of the countries […]; (4) its recognition of influences from other Latin American music; (5) its emphasis on strategically communal and celebratory practices; (6) its aspirations to local engagement, interpretations, and applications; and lastly (7) its constant tension with other sectors of the metal scene, including the Global North. (VARAZ-DÍAZ *et al*., 2020, p.20).

Informed mainly by Zândhio Huku's upbringing, experiences, and knowledge in and of Indigenous cultures, the lyrical content and the linguistic apparatuses in Arandu Arakuaa's decolonial metal has operated in denouncing the erasure of different Indigenous languages, while also addressing other interconnected domains of (neo)colonial oppression, including the massive appropriation of Native land in Brazil and its impact on the epistemic, ontological and cosmological outcomes of Indigenous groups.

However, Arandu Arakuaa's decolonial perspective is not limited to the denouncing of coloniality; rather, the band's trajectory has been characterized by the deepening of a simultaneously musical and narrative treatment of decolonial *healing*. As mentioned

previously, the increasing predominance of Indigenous/regional instrumentation in Arandu Arakuaa's music constitutes a reversion in the conventional organization of Folk Metal hybridity. This musical shift also encompasses a more distinguished and organic usage of the musicians' bodies in music making and performance: the body no longer merely interacts with and manipulates a sound-producing object that we call a music instrument; it is, after all, the original musical instrument.

As Atau Tanaka and Marco Donnarumma put forth, the notion of the body as instrument relies on a cross-disciplinary set of resources beyond musical performance, including cultural studies of the body to human–computer interaction and phenomenology. The usage of the body as a musical instrument, or as a physiological musical technology "creates interactions between the performer and system, performer and space, and performer and audience, as forms of musical expression that are embodied, adaptive, and emergent. This enables novel ways of exploring sound and space" (TANAKA & DONNARUMMA, 2018, p. 17).

The music of Arandu Arakuaa—in terms of production and performance—has presented an increasing usage of *body percussion*; namely, the sound of bass drums is often replaced by or performed along with foot stomping, which not only results in a more organic sound, but also reinforces the Indigenous ritualistic nature of Arandu Arakuaa's music. Although this bodily musical feature has been present from the band's early, aforementioned works, it is a key element in the latter releases—the 2018 full-length album *Mrã Waze* (which translates from the Akwẽ Xerente as "Respect to Nature") and the 2021 EP *Ainãka* ("Sky"). The cover arts of the two albums are shown below:

Fig. 4: Cover arts of the albums *Mrã Waze* (2018) and *Ainãka* (2021). Source: Encyclopaedia Metallum (https://www.metal-archives.com)

The half-human, half-jaguar semblance depicted in the cover art of *Mrã Waze* not only makes reference to Arandu Arakuaa's shape-shifting, hybrid Indigenous Metal, but is informed by Zândhio Huku's spirituality and identification with the South American *Onça Pintada* (as represented in his Akwẽ Xerente name). The album's 5th track "Huku Hêmba" (or "Jaguar Spirit") is a tribute to the animal; the concept behind its lyrical content is clarified at length by Zândhio himself: "essa música fala sobre o uso das medicinas de cura pelos Pajés com a energia dos animais; nesse caso, com a energia da onça pintada, que é um animal muito conhecido e cultuado pelos povos nativos da América Latina. Tem casos de Povos-Onça".[81] Whereas the jaguar is a symbol of pride and love in Indigenous cosmologies and episteme, as illustrated in the song verses "Jaguar Spirit! I'm the jaguar! I have the knowledge / We are alike in spirit (come) / We love alike (come), come, jaguar",[82] its Native symbolisms have been appropriated by the modern/colonial, hegemonic Western system of beliefs (inherited in Brazilian popular sayings such as 'amigo da onça', coined by the cartoonist Péricles Maranhão, in reference to a deceitful, treacherous individual), constituting what Zândhio considers "a political strategy of our colonizers, aimed at demonizing the animal in order to inhibit the peoples who work with its energy". However, and taking into account the colonial positioning of Indigenous communities as the 'Indian problem' (whose presence in legally Native land *unsettles* the settler colonial project, and whose presence in urban spaces is *unthinkable* in the colonial/modern imaginary), one can assume that the jaguar's friend, the untrustworthy presence that must live—if at all—in the distant forests, refers precisely to an Indigenous person.

The alternative narrativization presented in the song "Huku Hêmba", as well as Zândhio's articulation of the concept behind it, operate from a decolonial perspective that proposes a rupture with this distorted colonial paradigm—the recurring ideological articulation of the jaguar (a key figure in Indigenous episteme) as a symbol of dishonesty. In order words, the lyrical content of "Huku Hêmba" resonates with what Walter Mignolo conceptualizes as epistemic de-linking:

> to shift the geo-and body-politics of knowledge from its foundation in Western imperial history of the past five centuries, to the geo-and body-politics of people, languages, religions, political and economic conceptions, subjectivities, etc., that have been racialized (that is, denied their plain humanity). Thus, by 'Western' I do

[81] Arandu Arakuaa: "Conceito da Música Huku Hêmba", available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eagDWJIRQRY

[82] "Huku hêmba! watô huku! wa waihkudi / Wasi wa wa hêmba (aiwi) / Wasi wa wa si w~e-ki (aiwi), aiwi huku" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2018).

> not mean geography per say, but the geo-politics of knowledge. (MIGNOLO, 2007, 13-14).

In rescuing Indigenous epistemic values from the imposed ideological restraints of an imperial, Western geo-politics of knowledge, the discursive practice of "Huku Hêmba" follows a decolonial option, which requires, among other things, "learning to unlearn" (MIGNOLO, 2007, p. 14) the knowledge that has been built on the categorical foundations of colonial—physical and cultural—violence, also ingrained in Brazilian popular culture. While the saying 'amigo da onça' may seem inoffensive to some, in disregard of the aforementioned significance of the jaguar in Indigenous cosmologies, stereotypical expressions such as 'programa de índio' (the imposed ideological articulation of Indigenous populations as unsophisticated and primitive) are only part of an extensive vocabulary rooted in the imaginary of Western modernity/coloniality.

The rupture with coloniality is, however, a long process that involves healing the colonial wound (or the inferiority inflicted by the colonial matrix of power upon racialized bodies and subjectivities in the context of Latin America). Healing requires us to de-link from Western narratives rooted in (neo)colonial subjugation, and as Mignolo points out, "'Art' is one way of doing it" (MIGNOLO, 2017). The narrativization of decolonial healing in Arandu Arakuaa's music, as previously discussed, is at times denunciatory of colonial violence, and at other times grounded on a shamanic approach to healing—invoking the spiritual healing energy of animals, as carried out in "Huku Hêmba", whose reference to the symbol of the jaguar in Indigenous episteme and cosmology operates in recovering it from a modern/colonial, degenerate ideological articulation.

On a similar vein, the 2nd track from the 2021 EP *Ainãka*, entitled "Kaburéûasu" (from the Tupi "Owl") and whose songwriting process was informed by Zândhio's spiritual works, is Arandu Arakuaa's musical tribute to the animal. According to the songwriter, Pajés (shamans and healers) are scientists who use the knowledge of the forests to heal other people—the separation between science and spirituality is a monotheistic endeavor—, however, artists perform healing through other means.[83] Zândhio's own conceptualization of the owl expands on more conventional, wide-ranging cultural views of the animal as a symbol of knowledge, and proposes that the owl bears a medicinal energy that can be harnessed for the exploring of unknown places and unheard ideas, as illustrated in the verses "May I see /

[83] Arandu Arakuaa - Conceito da Música Kaburéûasu. Avaialable at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3V06v9wgWKY&t=231s

Thy healing / Thy wisdom / […] Within my body/ […] Within my soul" (ARANDU ARAKUAA, 2021).[84]

This lyrical content is matched musically in the song's introduction through the incorporation of a natural soundscape, with the chirping of crickets and the hoot of an owl, as well as a relaxing sound of water flow alongside a viola caipira melody. The aforementioned verses are sung in harmony by Zândhio Huku and Arandu Arakuaa's new singer, Andressa Barbosa. The song soon transits into an upbeat, entirely acoustic section, with the joining of maracá and atabaque percussions that underlie Andressa Barbosa's crystal-clear vocal lines. This section regularly overlaps with Indigenous chants ("Ybyrá apûã-pé!", or "at the top of the tree!") and the growing presence of drums and bass guitar. Although Metal elements (e.g. screamed vocals and heavily distorted electric guitars) appear after the second minute, they do so alongside Northeastern rhythms and melodic lines, in a powerful crescendo. Then, the song collapses into a tense atmosphere, marked by tribal atabaque drumming and guttural choirs; this short interlude appears to establish a symmetry point, as the song now travels back across its previous melodic stages, and comes full-circle at end—rescuing all the sonic apparatuses that were present in the beginning.

On the whole, the song "Kaburéûasu" is illustrative of Arandu Arakuaa's increasing focus, throughout the band's trajectory, on Indigenous and regional musical elements, and it contains a distinctive viola-caipira solo. The complexity conveyed in its diverse sections is analogous to the previously mentioned traits of the owl, put forth by Zândhio, as a symbol of spatial and epistemic exploration. Furthermore, the usage of natural soundscapes (courtesy of Arandu Arakuaa's producer Caio Duarte) alongside a predominantly local instrumentation gives rise to serene, dreamlike atmospheres, and operates synergically with Arandu Arakuaa's narrative treatment of healing, constituting a distinctive decolonial aesthesis.

[84] "T'a'ekatu / Nde posanga / Nde tekokuaba / […] Xe r-eté pupé / […] Xe 'anga pupé".

Fig. 5: Image (frame) taken from the music video of the song “Kaburéûasu” (2021). Source: YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUWd7C4EtOk)

4. CHAPTER IV –
TRANSLOCAL SOLIDARITY IN THE CHICANO RAP-METAL OF RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

"I was born landless
This is tha native son
Born of Zapata's guns
Stroll through tha shanties
And tha cities remains
Same bodies buried hungry
But with different last names".

Zack de La Rocha

4.1 When Rap and Rock Collide

The history of collaboration between hip hop and heavy metal extends back over three decades to the early-to-mid 1980s New York City. This history has been, however, oftentimes obscured by the fact that these two global reaching musical movements are widely considered opposite and incompatible. Before approaching their musical and cultural associations, let us recall the translocal origins of hip hop and heavy metal. The two previous chapters of this dissertation have provided a mappings of their emergence, namely in terms of hip hop's diasporic, Caribbean origins as linked to a history of Black Atlantic music (GILROY, 1993), and the rise of heavy metal in a British working-class milieu; furthermore, we have seen how both hip hop and heavy metal, through their specific scopes of networking practices (e.g. hip hop peripheral cultural dynamics; and local, underground Metal scenes), traveled far towards the Global South where they were appropriated, giving rise to locally and culturally specific musical incarnations.

These national appropriations have involved more than a unilateral process in which "Non-Western musicians and musicians from subaltern groups within the West create new syncretic forms drawing on both Western and non-Western music" (KAHN-HARRIS, 2000, p. 13); rather, in historicizing hip hop and heavy metal, this investigation has suggested that the two movements have been translocal from their outset, and both have given continuity to specific geopolitics of musical hybridity crossing physical and cultural borders, beyond their more notable association with and common origin in the Blues. Hence, the questioning of

U.S.-centric hip hop model of 'nationalism' was proposed in Chapter 2, while the analysis of heavy metal translocality aimed at unsettling its oftentimes monolithic, Eurocentric and ethnocentric construction—the latter, as previously discussed, was manifested namely in Scandinavian Extreme Metal scenes. However, ethnocentric paradigms in heavy metal in general have also reinforced (white) essentialism and elitism within Metal scenes, further distancing the musical movement from hip hop while the neglect of their history of collaboration has been common among fans and musicians alike.

In the mid-1980s, heavy metal music reached its peak of popularity and commercial success both in the Global South and in the Global North, however, rap (which constitutes, alongside DJing, the musical manifestation of hip hop) had not yet appeared in the mainstream, as evidenced through the Billboards of the time. Things began to change with the emergence of Queens-based hip hop group Run-DMC. Figuring in their 1984 eponymous debut, the song "Rock Box" incorporated heavily distorted electric guitar riffs and solos alongside beats, scratching, and rapping. In the following year, the sophomore album *King of Rock*, as evidenced in the title, further expanded this hybrid approach to hip hop (e.g. "Can You Rock it Like This", "You're Blind", and the title track). However, it was with the release of the 1986 LP *Raising Hell* that Run-DMC drew unprecedented mainstream attention to hip hop.[85] The song "Walk This Way", which featured the famed hard rock band Aerosmith, fused rapping with metal guitars and Steven Tyler's high-pitched screams, peaking at number four in the Billboards. Furthermore, the song's official music video[86] symbolically addresses the breaching of boundaries between rap and rock, displaying the members of Aerosmith and Run-DMC playing music in different rooms, separated by a wall, until it is broken down and both groups perform together.

Run-DMC paved the way for other hip hop groups from the late 1980s and early 90s to incorporate, although sporadically, the interplay with rock elements in their music—Public Enemy, Beastie Boys, Boogie Down Productions and LL Cool J are important mentions. Meanwhile, in the rock of Faith No More and Red Hot Chili Peppers, and even in the thrash/groove metal of Anthrax, experimentations with rap-based dynamics began to take form.

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[85] As Hermano Vianna puts forth, "Com essa mesma estratégia musical e incorporando alguns elementos da estética heavy metal, como os solos estridentes de guitarra, o mesmo Run-DMC conseguiu em 86, com o lançamento de seu LP Raising Heli, trans formar o rap em njúsica comercial, chegando a vender mais de 2 milhões de discos" (VIANNA, 1988, p. 7).

[86] RUN DMC - Walk This Way (Official HD Video) ft. Aerosmith: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4B_UYYPb-Gk

As discussed in the previous chapter, the 1990s was the period when traditional heavy metal forms started losing popularity and mainstream space (it is widely considered the decade of grunge among rock fans, with the peaking of commercial success of bands such as Nirvana and Pearl Jam). Just as rock elements had served hip hop in the 1980s, rapping and DJing were being increasingly incorporated into rock and metal music not only in the United States, but also in Brazil—as illustrated in the Northeastern *manguebeat* of Chico Science and Nação Zumbi. This hybrid interplay prompted the emergence and popularization of new subgenres, and enabled Metal music's reoccupation of the mainstream.

In 1991, hailing from Los Angeles, California, the rap-metal group Rage Against the Machine gave continuity to this history of collaboration between the two genres; however, it did so in a far-reaching manner, both in terms of melodic apparatuses and discursive practices. While their predecessors were occasionally incorporating musical hybridity in some of their songs, RATM made it their signature sound: it consists not only of the intercalation and overlapping of rap and metal musical elements, but also involves a reshaping of these elements. Namely, Tom Morello's groundbreaking, creative usage of electric guitar effects and mechanics create synth-like tones and even emulate DJing *scratching* sounds, ultimately embodying the aforesaid hybrid dynamics. On a similar vein, singer Zack de La Rocha's intricate vocal lines navigate fluently between rapping rhymes and visceral, Extreme Metal screaming. The music is sustained by the funky bass lines of Tim Commerford and the powerful drumming of Brad Wilk.

Aside from the ubiquitous—as opposed to the so far sporadic—incorporation of rap-metal hybridity in virtually all of their songs, Rage Against the Machine manifested a radical change in terms of lyrical content: on the one hand, the sociopolitical criticism that marked the formative years of hip hop (as discussed in Chapter 2) had given way to the more materialistic and ostentatious approach of gangsta rap in the 1990s; on the other hand, in that same decade, rock music's transgressive and countercultural bends as brought to the fore in heavy metal (Chapter 3) subsided and lost space to the inward-looking and emotional nature of grunge rock. Crucially, the emergence of RATM constituted a rupture with this trend, in the contexts of both rap and metal, regarding musical discursive practices.

4.2 Voice of the Voiceless

Few and far between are the musical incarnations which have achieved mainstream success while forwarding predominantly sociopolitical commentary. It is true that the 1960s and 70s were marked by the prominence of protest songs, with artists such as Bob Dylan, Nina Simone, Marvin Gaye and Bob Marley articulating powerful messages of political awareness and social change through their music; however, only a portion of their songs conveyed such subject matter. Following this period, the emergence of hip hop, from its Caribbean diasporic origins to its crystallization in the Bronx, was a step forward in the musical treatment of social issues, such as institutionalized racism, police brutality and the nation state's war on drugs (N.W.A, Public Enemy and Tupac in the U.S., as well as Racionais MC's, Sabotage and RZO in Brazil are important names). Meanwhile, in the context of rock and heavy metal music, the rise of local scenes both in the Global North and in the Global South was a catalyst for new subgenres, grounded on particular issues of cultural locality. However, in the 1990s, while U.S. hip hop transited to gangsta rap and heavy metal lost popularity to other rock forms, such as grunge and pop-rock. The inclination towards sociopolitical change and the transgressive discursive practices that marked both genres were waning in face of more inward-looking musical incarnations, especially in the context of the mainstream.

Accordingly, Lisa Tomlinson mentions, towards the middle of her article for The Huffington Post, "a current trend of silence on *political* and social issues as the mainstream artists in popular musical genres tend to be less concerned with sending out politically conscious music and are more caught up in fulfilling a capitalist agenda" (TOMLINSON, 2015, emphasis added). Tomlinson uses the term 'political' in the previously discussed context of early blues/jazz music, followed by the prominence of protest songs and the crystallization of the hip hop movement; that is, predominantly Black music aimed at denouncing oppressive social systems that denied African-Americans their human rights in order to "rally for global solidarity against colonialism, imperialism and racism" (2015). A clear definition of the political cannot be found without such contextualization or a concrete, specific situation—the recent trend of silence on *political* issues in the context of mainstream popular music, proposed by Tomlinson, is unclear; after all, even the previously mentioned introspective grunge rock of Nirvana, the *gangasta* rap of N.W.A., and the *sexy pop* of Britney Spears made famous in the 1990s potentially stem from and promotes specifically

political behavior or action. It would be implausible to say that such music is 'apolitical', or even that music of any kind should *necessarily* contemplate politics if their specifically political categories are unknown. The relationship between music—or art in general—and politics is likely to pose as many problems for those who assert that necessity as for those who promote a complete dissociation between the two.

While it is not the aim of this investigation to propose a framework for political thought in/through music, it is relevant to turn briefly to the concept of the political, as put forth by Jacques Rancière, in order to escape generalizing presuppositions in regards to so-called politically (un)conscious music movements. In *Disagreement,* Rancière initially conceptualizes politics addressing what it is *not*:

> Politics is generally seen as the set of procedures whereby the aggregation and consent of collectivities is achieved, the organization of powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimizing this distribution. I propose to give this system of distribution and legitimization another name. I propose to call it *the police* […] The police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and *ways of saying*, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that *this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise*. (RANCIÈRE, 1998, p. 28-9, emphasis added).

The general regard of politics—or even democracy, for that matter—as a set of legitimizing practices and organizing principles based on consensus is directly opposed by Rancière. This system that supposedly represents collectivities, that legitimizes certain ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying to the detriment of others, while (dis)placing people according to an order, is what he calls, instead, the police.[87] Democratic politics is a "disruption of this order of distribution of bodies as a community that we proposed to conceptualize in the broader concept of the police. [It is] what comes and interrupts the smooth working of this order through a singular mechanism of subjectification"[88] (1998, p. 99). In other words, politics occurs through *dissensus* from and disruption with the current, dominant social order.

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[87] Not to be mistaken for the policeman, who is but "one element in a social mechanism linking medicine, welfare, and culture, [...] *destined* to play the role of consultant and organizer as much as agent of public law and order" (RANCIÈRE, p. 29, emphasis added)—although 'supposed' might be a better word.

[88] "By subjectification I mean the production through a series of actions of a body and a capacity for enunciation not previously identifiable within a given field of experience, whose identification is thus part of the reconfiguration of the field of experience" (1998, p. 35). Rancière uses the term subjectification in different ways: political subjectification refers to the process through which the police constitution of the community is transgressed; that is, the rejection of its previous, singular categorizations/classifications. Political subjectificaiton produces a multiple, while policing subjectification produces a *singularized* 'universal'.

Neither politics nor the police should be, however, mistaken for the State apparatus. This common misconception accepts as a point of departure, according to Rancière, an "opposition between State and society in which the state is portrayed as a *machine*, a 'cold monster' imposing its rigid order on the life of society" (1998, p. 29, emphasis added). In reality, State apparatuses and social relations are both involved in policing, in the distribution of places and roles for people to fill; both spheres operate, oftentimes synergically, in the allocation and legitimization of certain *ways of doing*, *ways of being*, and *ways of saying*, and see that those bodies are categorized under a hegemonic culture of 'normalcy'.

When the political is addressed in the context of music, then, it is precipitate to characterize musical forms that do not explicitly address the State as 'apolitical'; political music is manifested when it is questioning of normalcy—the singularized 'universal' normalcy, also grounded on socially and culturally disseminated paradigms and ideological valuations of race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, class, ableness, and religion, for instance. Similarly, it would be precipitate to assume that the 'machine' in Rage Against the Machine refers solely to the State, the 'cold enemy', when their songs provide a more complex picture: "I was born to rage against 'em […] Yes, I know my enemies / They're the teachers who taught me to fight me / Compromise. Conformity. Assimilation. Submission. Ignorance . Hypocrisy. Brutality. The elite. / All of which are American dreams" (RATM, "Know Your Enemy", 1992).

Along with their predominant rap-metal musical hybridity, Rage Against the Machine also became distinctive for ubiquitously questioning the aforementioned policing normalcy in their songs and in activism, while articulating "a multiple that was not given in the police constitution of the community" (RANCIÈRE, 1998, p. 36), namely in terms of their Chicano politics.

As Santino Rivera argues, "[b]ack in the day, the band stormed the mainstream scene with angry Chicano rock, only the mainstream never noticed the Chicano part. Chicano rock? You mean Santana…?" (RIVERA, 2012), simultaneously highlighting two aspects of popular music in this context (1990s United States): the small presence of Chicano/a artists in the mainstream rock scene (not to mention popular Chicano/a artists whose music conveyed social commentary)[89] and also the general public's obliviousness in relation to the music's

[89] Besides the famous blues-rock guitarist Carlos Santana, mentioned by Rivera, a few other Chicano musicians have attained mainstream success in rock music, such as Maná, Los Lonely Boys, and The Mars Volta, none

political discursive practice. Rage Against the Machine's Chicano politics and activism, as discussed in the next section, are primarily focused on a reemergence of the Indigenous, through a critique of Coloniaty, and on a call for translocal solidarity. Illustrative of this critique, the song "People of the Sun" (from the album *Evil Empire,* 1996) is analyzed here in order to approach key elements of Chicano/a politics and culture that are present in the music of Rage Against the Machine, in relation to specific social and political conjunctures of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. Nevertheless, this chapter also aims at demonstrating how the band's musical and discursive practices, operating synergically, cross boundaries between musical styles and geographic areas in a markedly translocal commitment—constituting a coalitional decolonial endeavor.

4.3 "Word is Born: Fight the war, Fuck the norm" - RATM in Context

In *'Empire' Records: A Study Of Resistance And The Politics Of Cultural Production In The Network Age* (2010), Douglas G. Tewksbury carries out a case study on the trajectory of RATM as a band whose "approach to music was fundamentally political and quite direct in its critical discourses of power inequality: There was no mistaking this band's politics of activism, anti-establishment ideals, countercultural beliefs, and social justice" (TEWKSBURY, 2010, p. 90). He draws a parallel between Rage Against the Machine and contemporary popular music artists in both akin and distinct genres. The contextualization articulated by Tewksbury tackles the band's lyrical content (in its socially inclined motivations and motifs as opposed to the generally self-centered lyrics in contemporary rock and pop music, as mentioned previously), the musicians' endeavors on and off-stage, as well as their pioneering role as the first rap-metal band. This section briefly contextualizes Rage Against the Machine's musical hybridity in order to account for the discursive potentiality imbued in their songs, along with key cultural implications underlying it.

When referring to Rage Against the Machine's eponymous debut album, released in 1992, Tewksbury highlights the sociopolitical commentary conveyed throughout its song lyrics, and puts forth that the release was

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of which primarily focuses on sociopolitical issues in their lyrical contents. The same applies to other artists in the same context, exemplified here: https://www.ranker.com/list/chicano-rock-bands-and-musicians/reference

> fundamentally assaulting to structures of the dominant social order, a decidedly leftist album focused on a politics of resistance, rebellion, and a generalized antiestablishment ideals. Themes included U.S. government state intervention in third-world countries, anti-consumerism, anti-corporatism, critiques of consolidated and controlled media, police brutality, racism and sexism, globalization and third-world politics, and a host of other critiques of social functions resulting from disparity in orderings of power. (TEWKSBURY, 2010, p. 96).

In relating Tewksbury's observations with the discussion on the political as proposed by Rancière, it becomes evident that Rage Against the Machine is not raging solely against the State apparatuses, but against different forms of policing order. The band's critical angle is primarily set at exposing and undoing normalcy, or the naturalness of orders (as articulated not only through State action but also through social functions and conscious interactions among individuals). Namely, their song lyrics oftentimes propose a refusal of the marginalized position to which one is allocated under unequal classifications that normalize certain "ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying" to the detriment of others (RANCIÈRE, 1998, p. 28); in other words, a refusal of the submission conveyed in dominant forms of policing subjectification, a refusal of inferiority and servitude. Although primarily informed by singer Zack de La Rocha's Chicano identity, RATM's discursive practice, as Tewksbury reminds us, also involve more general "critiques of consolidated and controlled media, police brutality, racism and sexism" (2010, p. 96), and the articulation of solidarity among different, racialized social groups.

The band's sophomore album, entitled *Evil Empire* (1996), is illustrative of RATM's wide-ranging activism. The lyrics for "Voice of the Voiceless", for instance, are explicitly targeted at the internationally known 1982 murder trial—overturned to life imprisonment without parole sentence in 2011—of Mumia Abu-Jamal, political activist, journalist and former member of the Black Panther Party:

> True rebel my brother Mumia
> I reflect upon
> You be tha spark
> That set all tha prairie fires on
> Make tha masses a mastodon path
> To trample tha fascists on
> At fifteen exposed Philly's finest killing machine
> With boots and mad guns
> They tried to pacify you young
> Cause and effect
> Smell tha smoke and tha breeze
> My panther my brother
> We are at war until you're free
> You'll never silence tha voice of tha voiceless. (RATM, 1996).

RATM's musical perspective on the trial of Mumia echoes a long history of criticism towards constitutional failings in the context of the United States prison system. Namely, these deficiencies (especially recurrent in the judicial treatment of Black, Indigenous, Chicano/as and other racialized groups) and the possible political influences underlying the case have raised the concern of Amnesty International.[90]

Rage Against the Machine's identification and engagement with the socioeconomic struggles imbuing Black Politics in the United States gives continuity to a long tradition of militant discursive practices in hip hop movements far beyond the country's national borders. Their coalitional endeavor is also represented in songs such as "Wake Up", from their 1992 eponymous debut album, i.e. through the verses "You know they went after King / When he spoke out on Vietnam / He turned the power to the have-nots / And then came the shot" (RATM, 1992), denouncing the political assassination of Black civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. Ten years later, Brazilian hip hop pioneers Racionais MC's were articulating a similar critique through their song "Jesus Chorou": "Gente que acredito, gosto e admiro / Brigava por justiça e paz, levou tiro / Malcolm X, Ghandi, Lennon, Marvin Gaye / Che Guevara, 2pac, Bob Marley / E o evangélico Martin Luther King" (RACIONAIS MC'S, 2002), bringing forth a connection among important names in different scopes of activism, across religious, political, and musical standpoints.

On a similar vein, as Dorian Lynskey submits, the militant practice of Rage Against the Machine, on and off-stage, has been targeted at different fronts of action beyond the conjunctures of racialized communities in the U.S., crossing distant borders towards Vietnam and Nicaragua; the band's musical narrativization has been crucially informed—as stated in the very booklet of *Evil Empire*—by names such as Frantz Fanon and Che Guevara:

> they campaigned to free the Native American Leonard Peltier and the Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal, both convicted of murder on dubious evidence, while De la Rocha spent a great deal of time with the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, a guerrilla cadre fighting the Mexican government in the impoverished Chiapas region. Their songwriting, however, kept flashing back to Vietnam, Nicaragua, and that old chestnut the military industrial complex, or relying on vague sloganeering. Even the exhaustive reading list on the record sleeve drew heavily on a previous era: Cleaver, Guevara, Fanon, Marcuse. (LYNSKEY, 2011, p. 637).

[90] "Concern about possible judicial bias is not limited to Pennsylvania and the resources provided to indigent defendants are pitifully inadequate in many jurisdictions. Police misconduct has been cited in many cases and the risk of wrongful convictions in capital trials remains alarmingly high.Amnesty International remains concerned that the relationship between the Pennsylvania judiciary and the law enforcement community at the very least gives rise to the unfortunate impression that justice is a one-way street leading to Mumia Abu-Jamal's eventual execution". Amnesty International . A Life in the Balance: The Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. 2000.

This militant political criticism, ubiquitously present in RATM's music, is reflected on a predominant aggressiveness via melodic apparatuses, in a synergic relationship between heavy metal and rap—one of the several dichotomies (re)articulated in their songs. As Andrew Green argues, listening to Rage Against the Machine's compositions is an immersion "in a world of perpetual global injustice, in which barely a crumb of comfort exists for the conscientious. It is a world of moral certainty in which people are either duped and complicit with unjust power, conscious perpetrators of it […] or resisting it" (GREEN, 2015, p. 393). The investigation of RATM's project in terms of its musical distinctiveness and fierce sociopolitical commentary is potentially enriched by an understanding of the role of anger, emotion and affect in the band's endeavor to effect social change through music, to challenge the *status quo* and establishment ideals. A sense of urgency (a 'Wake Up' call, as the song title goes) appears embedded not only discursively, through lyrics that are marked by the substantial use of sloganeering, historical references, slangs, and repetition, but also via the melodic apparatuses—namely, Zack de La Rocha's raw, agile rapping and strong Extreme Metal vocal delivery, along with Morello's heavily distorted electric guitar riffs and solos, Commerford's acid-funky bass, and Wilk's aggressive drums.

As mentioned previously, the music of Rage Against the Machine occupied the mainstream scene in a time when it was essentially detached from social commentary, especially towards the late 1990s. Similarly, in "Rage in a Time of Millennial Raving: Rage Against the Machine's Critical Disruption of Y2K Excitement" (2004), Phillip Serrato argues that with the release of their third album, "The Battle of Los Angeles", in November 1999, "Rage articulated and called for an aggressive, politicized consciousness in response to a range of social issues […] in stark contrast to the fact that music makers and music listeners in the U.S. were otherwise off working themselves into a bacchanalian Y2K party spirit" (SERRATO, 2004, p. 3). However, a contextualization of RATM's unforeseen emergence in mainstream music requires not only the addressing of top charts and Billboards (e.g. major artists and record labels), but also of the specific historicity of the musical incarnation created by the group: its distinctive and predominant merging of different genres and how these (namely rap and metal) figured in the 1990s, prompting the emergence of new music styles.

4.4 Bombtrack: Enter the Chicano Rap-Metal

Tewksbury argues that mainstream music in the mid-to-late 1990s consisted mostly of "teen pop and boy bands, inward-looking or nihilistic alternative forms, materialistic hip-hop or gangsta rap, all genres that were by and large apolitical in their views toward social change beyond perhaps a simple token song or a generalized but impotent rebellion" (2010, p. 90). The generalizing standards regarding 'apolitical' music have been questioned earlier in this chapter; however, Tewksbury is right in submitting that Rage Against the Machine went in a distinct direction in contrast to most of their contemporaries, and the band's rise to the mainstream sphere constituted a complex enigma which, to this day, craves further understanding. An attempt to tackle this phenomenon compels us to historicize RATM's musical and social context, an exercise that can shed light on the limitations and potentialities of musical movements today.

We have seen that the prominence of social commentary in music (e.g. protest songs) that crucially marked the period from the 1960s to the late 1980s in different popular musical genres—such as Soul, Hip Hop and Rock—began to wane in the 1990s. While hip hop remained present in the U.S. mainstream top charts, it was starkly different in terms of lyrical content and discursive practices when contrasted with its formative years. Regarding this context of musical discursive transformation, Akilah Folami calls attention to a commodification of the genre, arguing that

> [w]ith the five-member group called Niggas With Attitude (N.W.A), America got a glimpse of life on the West coast. This image was filled with gang violence and pure seething rage. In contestation with the 'positive' rap from the East, the West Coast sound was defined as 'gangsta' rap, and was filled with references to Black women as hos and bitches and Black men as gangstas and 'niggas.' Generally, rappers also adopted the traditional Black bourgeois notions of attaining the American Dream via capitalism and consumerism but rejected its elitism and belief that one had to assimilate. (FOLAMI, 2016, p. 144).

Curiously, as hip hop became increasingly 'commodified'—what Folami considers an inclination, expressed in terms of lyrical content and individual attitude, towards capitalist and consumerist paradigms—, rock subgenres such as punk (represented in the wave of rage and fierce social commitment as carried out by Dead Kennedys, Anti-Flag, and NOFX, for instance) and heavy metal (whose musical construction of place and culture was prompted with the emergence of local scenes, as discussed in Chapter 3) began to lose popularity and mainstream space; the inward-looking grunge rock, contrastingly, was reaching its

commercial peak. As it seemed, the big audiences and the music industry itself were sending a message that music and 'politics' should no longer come together. In opposition to this widespread, ever-growing tendency, Rage Against the Machine rose to the mainstream in the mid-1990s, employing not only a surprising fusion of two genres that are widely considered incompatible and which had been commodified in the form of socially detached counterparts (gangsta rap and grunge rock), but also the first music incarnation to be ubiquitously drawn on sociopolitical commentary while consistently occupying the mainstream.

Arguably, the hybridity embodied by RATM was precisely what prompted the band's pioneering locus of success; in recovering punk rock and hip hop's formative engagement with social struggle and activism, fusing riffs and rhymes, and further invigorating the music with the shocking aggression of Metal, the band was able to attract different audiences. From the beginning, the message in the music reflected the band's engagement in different forms of activism aimed at both national and foreign policies of U.S government. As Zack de La Rocha once said, the work of Rage Against the Machine was aimed at "spreading those ideas through art, because music has the power to cross borders, to break military sieges and to establish real dialogue".[91]

One example of RATM's translocal engagement was their open support of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), whose black flag and red star (see Figure 6) has oftentimes constituted the band's emblem on and off-stage; moreover, reference to the symbol is also present in the lyrics for the song "War Within a Breath", with the verses "A black flag and a red star / A rising sun, loomin' over Los Angeles / Cause for Raza livin' in La La / Is like Gaza on to the dawn of Intifada", articulating a border thinking that extrapolates the U.S.-Mexico divide, as the song refers, respectively, to Mexican and Palestinian sociopolitical conflicts.

[91] WOOLDRIDGE, Simon. "Fight the Power", *Juice Magazine*, 2007.

Fig. 6: Rage Against the Machine live at L.A. Rising, July 30, 2011. Source: The Jakarta Post (https://www.thejakartapost.com/life/2020/02/11/rage-against-the-machine-announces-reunion-tour.html)

This crossing of borders, as illustrated in the song lyrics, is addressed in the next section in relation to the group's translocal perspective. As Glória Anzaldúa puts forward, the modern/colonial setting up of borders stems from a powerful regulating process that defines "the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. […] A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary [in] constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants" (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. 3). This leads to the understanding of borders not only as locally specified, but also as spaces, temporalities, and conditions for the articulation of translocal politics through the understanding of shared struggles among different communities marked by the colonial wound.

Although born and raised in California, Zack de La Rocha has been both a vocal and personal supporter of the Zapatistas, having traveled to Chiapas, Mexico, in a number of occasions, working alongside campesinos in their communities of resistance and participating in their marches:[92]

[92] For more information: https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/the-battle-of-rage-against-the-machine-101068/

> We are here in Chiapas, Mexico, among one of the communities of resistance. And we are here to send a clear message to the U.S. government as well as the government of Mexico, that despite all their threats, and despite all of their intimidation, despite all their tactics of rape and murder, that they cannot isolate the communities of resistance in Chiapas. We are here to as well speak with the campesinos from all over the country, as they give their testimonies of the very destructive war being waged against their communities because they decided to resist. […] We share a common history and a common struggle, and that is why we are here. Through music we have been able to try to create a bridge between these communities of resistance and the people at home who suffer from many of the same conditions that these people suffer from. And young people in the States are in a period of their lives where they are completely disillusioned with the so-called two party system in the U.S.(DE LA ROCHA, 1998).[93]

The singer's endeavor, in highlighting these shared, common struggles and histories, is informed by his Chicano identity as the son of famed visual artist Roberto de La Rocha, member of the Chicano collective Los Four, which acquired mainstream attention through an exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). As, Douglas Tewksbury highlights, De La Rocha and RATM have also been advocates for a number of political notables including, besides the abovementioned journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, death-row prisoners Leonard Peltier and political activist and scholar Noam Chomsky, as well as Chuck D of Public Enemy (TEWKSBURY, 2010, p. 101). Furthermore, as suggested in the following section, the band's main lyricist has imbued the music with this political engagement, fundamentally drawing on the historicity of Indigenous colonial struggle and the violent conditions of U.S.-Mexico borderlands in order to articulate a Chicano cultural politics of today.

4.5 Guerrilla Radio: Lyrical and Melodic Apparatuses

This section aims at elucidating the articulation of Chicano politics and cultural identity conveyed in Rage Against the Machine's music, as well as its potentiality in terms of translocal solidarity and coalition. The discussion focuses on one specific song both in terms of the verbal text (e.g. song lyrics) and melodic apparatuses (e.g. timbre and techniques of voice and instruments, tone, rhythm, and tempo), without delving, however, in music theory, due to space constraints as well as relevance for the specific context of the investigation. The song "People of the Sun" (*Evil Empire,* 1996), by Rage Against the Machine, is analyzed in

[93] The short documentary directed by Osiris Castañeda is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6GBLwo3eBQ

order to approach the history of violence of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, drawing a parallel between colonial and contemporary events—the struggles of Indigenous groups and the current conjuncture of the Zapatista Movement. The discussion also pertains to the translocal politics in RATM's music and social activism, relating them with social movements in Brazil (namely, the Landless Workers' Movement, or MST). In a musical performance, as I intend to demonstrate, discursive practices (e.g. lyrics) and the melodic apparatuses (e.g. instrumentation and singing) are in constant interplay and, ideally, should not be accounted for in isolation.

Moreover, as discussed by Green, "RATM is a band for which physicality and the sight of sound being produced are highly valued, proudly stating in their album notes: 'No samples, keyboards or synthesizers used in the making of this recording'" (GREEN, 2015, p. 395). Not only is music primarily meant to be listened to in conjunction with its lyrical content (when available), but in the case of Rage Against the Machine, the music made in the studio—and which is ultimately included in the albums—oftentimes attempts to emulate the sense of physicality and authenticity of performance through different melodic apparatuses. While Green's investigation addresses live, visual performances, namely emphasizing how the musicians' aggressiveness in these performances takes shape on a bodily level (finding support in Affect Theory), I aim at highlighting the aforesaid physicality in the musical performance as present in the studio albums in order to deepen the understanding of aural elements in RATM's musical and discursive practices, which constitute the billboard-hitting product the band publishes and sells. Green—also drawing on notions put forth by Victoria L. Henderson ("Is there hope for anger? The politics of spatializing and (re)producing an emotion", 2008) and James M. Jasper ("The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions In and Around Social Movements", 1998), focuses on the role of anger as performed in Rage Against the Machine's militant music. According to the author, even though anger takes place on a bodily level (manifested or performed), the emotion tends to be "drawn into a *discursive* context. If someone is angry, we look to find out the reason; if one feels angry, one searches within oneself to discover why. Like other emotions, anger is 'tied to moral values, often arising from perceived infractions of moral rules'" (GREEN, 2015, p. 391, emphasis added). Firstly, in regards to 'performing' anger in/trough the music of Rage Against the Machine, Green argues that the process involves an appropriation of expressions of anger: the band's sonic and performative aggressiveness (discussed next) operates in synergy with their discourse of political resistance, creating what the author calls a "politico-

emotional project" (2015, p. 397), that is, the channeling of anger towards political resistance, followed by its performance (expression) through the body and through specific musical elements.

For instance, the song "People of the Sun", from the album *Evil Empire*, starts off with singer Zack de la Rocha freestyling a few words, as if directed to a live audience ("people, come up!"), and giving audio directions, as in "we better turn the bass up on this one, check it!". The frequent resort to live-sounding, freestyling exclamatory and imperative sentences is but one of the elements that underscore Rage Against the Machine's commitment to hip hop, the core musical background of De La Rocha, and to a sense of live-like authenticity. Additionally, the singer's usage of audio directions, as occurs in this song, blurs the gap between product and process, past and present, since sound regulation is a procedure that normally takes place during performance, recording or mixing processes, and not in the final product (that which is final is not generally subject to modifications). In its live-like nature, this aural apparatus potentially enables the listener to experience the studio album partly as a live performance, as a kind of process-shaped product, not fixed in the past; rather, it transits from object to event. Interestingly, as I intend to demonstrate, this endeavor—carried out by Rage Against the Machine through aural apparatuses—finds resonance in the band's discursive (re)constructions of cultural identity, potentially breaking with the Western idea of linear time (itself inherited from a Hebraic perspective on temporality).

Lyrically, "People of the Sun" is predominantly imbued with rhyming schemes and historical references, as displayed in the following lines:

> Since 1516, minds attacked and overseen
> Now crawl amidst the ruins of this empty dream
> They're borders and boots on top of us
> Pullin' knobs on the floor of their toxic metropolis. (RATM, 1996).

The song's initial verses reference the year 1516, which historically marked the arrival of the Spanish Conquistadors in Mexico, the beginning of colonial rule and the massacre of Indigenous peoples in continuous wars. While the first line portrays the historical process of decimation and the slavery that stemmed from it—"Since 1516, minds attacked and overseen"—, the subsequent verses immediately connect these events with present conditions of Coloniality (as discussed in Chapter 3 in reference to Quijano [2010]): the *ruins* of ancient cities where now *crawl* the descendants of enslaved and decimated Indigenous peoples, confined in an *empty* (the American?) *dream*, subjected to systematic displacement. As

articulated in the verses, such confinement manifests itself in the form of *borders and boots*, that is, under the authority of government territorial policies and military actions of the Modern/Colonial matrix of power. The last verse of the stanza addresses an environmental condition of toxicity: the agricultural work of people who are now *pullin' knobs* on soil that is contaminated by agrotoxics in the damaging side-effects of metropolitan 'progress', tackling the issue of land appropriation and labor exploitation.

The song lyrics continue as follows:

> When the fifth sun sets, get back, reclaim
> Tha spirit of Cuauhtémoc, alive an untamed
> Now face tha funk now blastin' out ya speaker
> On the one, Maya, Mexica
> That vulture came ta try and steal ya name but now you found a gun
> Yeah, this is for the people of the sun.

Addressed hereby and also in the following paragraphs, these verses convey the identification of the "people of the sun", firstly, articulating their relation to the Aztecs through the mention of Cuauhtémoc, ruler of Tenochtitlan and the last Aztec Emperor, who is here portrayed as being still *alive and untamed*. In conveying the rescue of Indigenous history and cosmology—keeping the Maya/Mexica cosmovision alive through the 'funk now blastin' out ya speaker'—, Rage Against the Machine expose the Indigenous *presence* as 'untamed', that is, liberated from its fixation in the past under the colonial structure of power. As Quijano points out,

> Between the Aztec- Maya-Caribbean and the Tawantinsuyana (or Inca) areas, about 65 million inhabitants were exterminated in a period of less than 50 years. The scale of this extermination was so huge that it involved not only a demographic catastrophe, but also the destruction of societies and cultures. The cultural repression and the massive genocide together turned the previous high cultures of America into illiterate, peasant subcultures condemned to orality; that is, deprived of their own patterns of formalized, objectivised, intellectual, and plastic or visual expression. Henceforth, the survivors would have no other modes of intellectual and plastic or visual formalized and objectivised expressions, but through the cultural patterns of the rulers, even if subverting them in certain cases to transmit other needs of expression. Latin America is, without doubt, the most extreme case of cultural colonization by Europe. (QUIJANO, 2010, p. 24).

The musical narrativization carried out by Rage Against the Machine in the song "People of the Sun" expose the ongoing operations of Coloniality brought forth by Quijano: massive land appropriation, labor exploitation and cultural repression are only part of the social landscape in Mexico today, as is also the case of several other countries in Latin America under the global reach of imperial capitalism. However, just as it denounces the

continuing presence of the coloniality of power, “People of the Sun” also foregrounds the resisting presence of Indigenous cosmology and identity (“That vulture came ta try and steal ya name but now you found a gun / Yeah, this is for the people of the sun”). The reemergence of the Indigenous is articulated here as a means to unsettle the settler colonial project, at once reclaiming the rights to land (the song’s initial verses address the Colonial borders of the Modern world) and the rights to live. As discussed at length in Chapter 3, Indigenous relationships to land are generally more than territorial and subsistential, but mainly epistemological, ontological, and cosmological.

Before further addressing the song lyrics, let us turn to the first verse of that previous passage: “When the fifth sun sets get back, reclaim” (RATM, 1996). Regarding the “fifth sun”—a crucial element in Aztec temporality—Gloria Anzaldúa explains that “Huitzilopochtli assigned the Azteca-Mexica the task of keeping the human race (the present cosmic age called the Fifth Sun, *EI Quinto Sol*) *alive* […], in charge of regulating all earthly matters. Their instrument: controlled or regulated war to gain and exercise power” (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. 32, emphasis added). Additionally, the age of the fifth sun is for the Aztecs part of a cycle of rise and ruin, creation and destruction, and it comprises the period when Spanish colonial domination began. As further discussed, Aztec society’s understanding of time crucially diverged from the Western notion of linearity; moreover, time—similarly to space, power, war, harvesting, and existence itself—is in their Indigenous episteme understood and experienced according to the cycle of the gods, as opposed to the linear perspective of past, present, and future.

Informed by his Chicano identity, De La Rocha articulates in “People of the Sun” a critique of imperial powers of old (the Spanish empire) and today (U.S. imperialist chains and interventions, both domestic and foreign). As seen in those verses, such critique is mainly grounded on the identification of a Chicano voice with Indigenous peoples and on an anti-anachronistic addressing of time, both interconnected. In “People of the Sun”, the rupture with a Western, linear idea of time is carried out through a twofold process: firstly, the song exposes the ongoing operations of Coloniality while also reaffirming the resisting presence of the Indigenous (i.e. Indigenous right to land is reclaimed in scrutinizing the colonial borders of the modern world,); secondly, in thinking simultaneously old and new forms of colonization (physical or cultural, but invariably brutal) the song questions the Euro-ethnocentric ‘evolution’ of Western Civilization, and invokes the cyclic condition of ruin

(colonial exploitation and domination) and rise (Indigenous resistance) of Maya/Mexica temporality.

The main problem stemming from anachronism, thus, is not exactly in the linear, directional notion of time as regarded in Hebraic traditions—e.g. Islamic and Judeo-Christian—, of course its temporal measurement has marvelously served technological and scientific purposes. However, its quantifiable attribute has also served Colonial/Modern history through processes of quantitativization of human beings according to capitalist principles of reduction and production, alongside nationalist paradigms of progress (some of which have been addressed in chapters 2 and 3, in the contexts of locally-based hip hop and heavy metal musics, respectively). The developmental civilizing ideology articulated under this Modern logic does not differ in the least from the political projects of the Civilizing Missions in Colonial Latin America. It is, first and foremost, the logic of acculturation and assimilation of an *other* who is allowed to live, and of erasure and extinction of an *other* who is not. Ironically, although it normally passes as a logic that rejects the past with eyes towards the future, it fundamentally needs a past—or its mythological fabrication of it—in order to continue, to move straight forward as a line, while the people are kept in one.

It is in a critical perspective of this perfect, evolutionary road to ruin—the Modern/Capitalist path—that Rage Against the Machine denounces, in the song "People of the Sun", an Eurocentric version of history based on the myth of progress, or as Quijano submits, a fabled view of the "history of human civilization as a trajectory that departed from a state of nature and culminated in Europe; […] a view of the differences between Europe and non-Europe as natural (racial) differences and not consequences of a history of power" (QUIJANO, 2001, p. 542).

The persistence of Coloniality following the end of Colonialism (the actual imperial political project) relies on the wide-ranging spread, both in space and time, of racial differentiation, or fabricated precepts of inferior and superior, normal and strange, past and future. Thus, Eliana Ávila puts forward that Western, *straight*—we can think not only in terms of linear, but also gendered—temporality is the "mapping of an anachronic or obsolete other" (ÁVILA, 2014, p. 2). Because Indigenous peoples are positioned anachronically according to such temporality, that is, fixed as *past*, primitive and unsophisticated, while the *evolution* that is implicit in the idea of linear time becomes synonymous with Europe, we are dealing with chronopolitics as fabricated through Western modernity. This is precisely why

Ávila argues that it is the aim of the decolonial text (although the same applies to music) to unsettle anachronistic perceptions through an alternative, anti-anachronistic, *queer* chronopolitics, one that crucially operates "by exposing the suppressed relations that trouble chrononormative boundaries, [and] performs a shift from a eurocentric to a decolonial standpoint" (ÁVILA, 2014, p. 9).

Similarly, it is my thesis that the music of Rage Against the Machine (as illustrated in "People of the Sun") is anti-anachronistic because it unsettles, at once, the chronopolitics (fixation of the Indigenous as obsolete and primitive) and the geopolitics (regulation of colonial borders) fabricated by (neo)colonial power. In opposing straight-time, the song does not interpret events from the past through concepts of the present, nor does it reinforce the mispositioning of Indigenous peoples as belated. In "People of the Sun", RATM's discursive practice (re)articulates contextual knowledge of Colonial struggle of the Aztecs, bringing forth Indigenous cosmology and resistance to contemplate the cyclic, revolving condition underlying the renewal of this matrix of power, that is, Coloniality—the historical milieu for anti-imperialist struggle taking place at the U.S.-Mexico divide in contemporaneity. The critique imbued in the song is, thus, different from presentism in the sense that it addresses the grounds of contemporary problematics while looking at subaltern groups (in their temporal geopolitics) that are anachronized as lacking or primitive: Indigenous episteme is hereby reclaimed through a Chicano politico-cultural identification.

Accordingly, as suggested in the song, when the Aztecs' "Fifth sun sets", a new cycle in Mexico and in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands begins in which it is necessary to "get back, reclaim / The spirit of Cuauhtémoc, alive and untamed". As Chicano writer Roberto González Flores discusses,

> Between 1514 and 1824 Mexico was a colony of Spain and many Chicanos view their second-class citizenship status, the discrimination, and immigrant status in the US tied to successive systems of oppression: Spanish Colonial rule (1514-1824), US imperialism and today global neocolonialism (1836 to present). The dire historic economic situation in Mexico is commonly referred to as the 'push factor' that results in the constant and increasing flow of what Marcos calls 'human export'. (FLORES, 2007, p. 26).[94]

In reclaiming and *getting back* to the history of violence effected by Western colonial and imperialist powers, directly linking them with the imposing "borders and boots" of today,

[94] FLORES, Roberto. Chican@ Artists and Zapatistas Walk Together Asking, Listening, Learning: The Role of Transnational Informal Learning Networks in the Creation of a Better World. University of Southern California. 2007.

Zack de La Rocha's lyrics for "People of the Sun", like many Chicano/as, call for a primary identification with the political agenda of Indigenous groups, campesinos, and the various communities of resistance in Mexico. The following lines of the song's chorus "It's comin' back around again / This is for the people of the sun! / It's comin' back around again!" represent these returning histories. The verses are repeated twice and then four times in a row, expressed through an aggressive vocal performance, foregrounding the cyclic condition of the physical and epistemic violence portrayed in the lyrics, relentlessly restating the need for the fight to continue.

Such exercise is mirrored by the song's melodic apparatuses, namely the electric guitar lines performed by Tom Morello, which concurrently repeat the notes B and C in the main riff, with little to no variation throughout the verses and choruses. These lines are transcribed next, as presented in the song's sheet music:

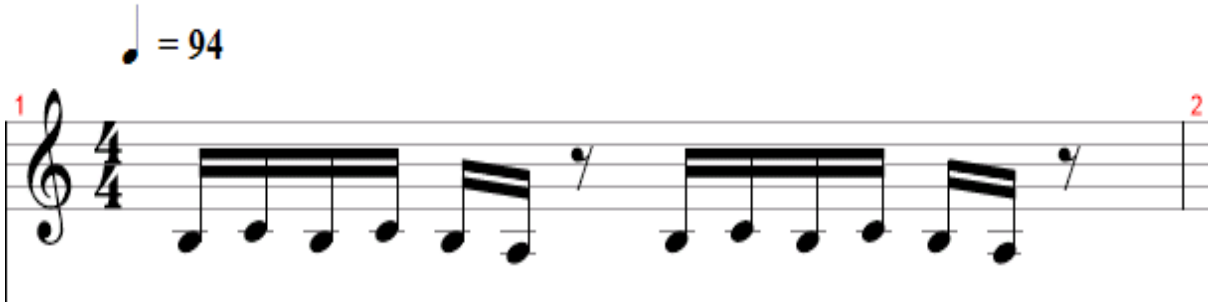

Fig. 7: Sheet music (electric guitar lines) for the introduction of "People of the Sun". Source: Ultimate Guitar (www.ultimate-guitar.com)

Interestingly, in the chorus of "People of the Sun", the execution of these notes—exclusively using the electric guitar's fifth string in its standard tuning, i.e. A—is simply transferred to the sixth string (E), becoming F and G in an interesting interplay of repetition and difference. Although repetition is used in several songs by Rage Against the Machine, it is markedly reinforced in "People of the Sun" via its melodic apparatuses (vocal and instrumental lines), in a consistent 4/4 time signature. This quality is discursively reflected in the lyrics: the interweaving of colonial memory and present struggles (namely Colonialism and Coloniality) is predominant throughout the verses, culminating meta-musically in the reiterative, cyclic chorus lines "it's comin' back around again". The first chorus is followed by the verses:

> Neva forget that tha wip snapped ya back
> Ya spine cracked for tobacco, oh I'm the Marlboro man
> Our past blastin' on through tha verses,
> Brigades of taxi cabs rollin' Broadway like hearses
> Troops strippin' zoots, shots of red mist,
> Sailors blood on tha deck, come sista resist
> Tha new era of terror check this photo lens,
> Tha city of angels does tha ethnic cleanse. (1996).

The words for the song "People of the Sun" are transcribed, in this section, precisely as presented in the CD booklet of the album *Evil Empire*. The rhyming verses quoted above further emphasize the use of African-American Vernacular English, one of the traditional forms of expression in hip-hop subculture. Similarly to the first verses of the song, these lines bring to the fore a link between the history of violence from a colonial context and current conjunctures of dispossessed communities, referencing specific events. For instance, the first two lines address the conditions of forced labor in crops of tobacco—introduced by Spanish dominators in Mexico and Florida in the colonial era—where Native Americans were recruited to work under the imposition of the settler missions and plantation owners; this context is then linked to the development of the U.S. tobacco industry of today, which has heavily impacted the economy, health, and environment of several populations across the Global South.

Furthermore, halfway through those lines, the song makes reference to the violent conflicts of the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943, which took place in Los Angeles, California, after waves of attacks by U.S. servicemen and civilians directed mainly toward youths of Mexican-American, African-American, and Filipino-Americans, with claims that these individuals were 'unpatriotic' for wearing zoot suits during World War II; the final lines denounce the political and ethnic nature of the attacks in a "new era of terror". As Flores highlights,

> Similar to the Indigenous of Mexico, Chican@s along with Blacks and Native Americans are culturally, socially, and economically at the bottom—the most marginalized. The cultural, national, and political identification between Chican@s and Indigenous seems to be the basis for further openness, for shared communication and the basis for further articulation of a common social political economic analysis. This initial identification becomes part of the bridge for a new and different type of solidarity, which the Zapatistas call 'walking together'. (FLORES, 2007, p. 27-8).

The articulation of this identification with Indigenous groups, as presented in the Chicano politics of Rage Against the Machine's hybrid music, is rendered possible mainly through an anti-anachronistic portrayal of time, creating a synthesis of the 'old' world and the 'new' while respecting local specificities, as suggested in the interplay between the "whip

[that] snapped ya back" and the "borders and boots on top of us". An anti-anachronistic perspective potentially liberates subaltern subjects from the hegemonic distinctions of colonial borders, that is, from being systematically marked as undeveloped. As mentioned previously, and evoking Anzaldúa's border thinking, Ávila discusses such "de-anachronizing paradigm" in contrast with the "straight time of coloniality", bringing to the fore "temporal borderlands, a chronoqueer dimension implicit in Gloria Anzaldúa's borderlands theory which both recognizes and unhinges the geotemporal borders by which coevalness has been effectively denied" (ÁVILA, 2018, p. 713). Thus, the anti-anachronistic approach to history articulated in the music of RATM highlights the open wounds of physical and cultural borders, historicizing a colonial context for the elucidation of ongoing, neocolonial violence—a discursive exercise that is mirrored by melodic apparatuses by means of repetition and difference, as well as an intricate dynamics of musical hybridity.

It is important to note that anti-anachronistic understandings of time are originally found in Indigenous episteme, as is the case of the "Maya, Mexica" peoples referenced in "People of the Sun", whose very lives, politics, and culture are permeated by cosmological practices. Icnitl Ytzamat-ul Contreras Garcia recalls the cyclic attribute of Aztec temporality: "en los mexicas existen cuatro edades que se viven antes del nacimiento del quinto sol; [...] ese tempo permanece en perenne contacto con el 'aquí-ahora' de los mexicas. Esse tiempo también les pertenece, lo hacen suyo, se responsabilizan de él porque a él también se deben" (CONTRERAS GARCÍA, 2013, p. 72). Contreras García accounts for the contrast between the Mexica-Maya traditions and the Western notion of time, lived as an empty line that only rescues events of hegemonic history. Maya-Mexica temporality directly opposes the developmentalist, Eurocentric idea of time imbued in Modern history—an idea that attempts to isolate *progress* from a revolving history of colonial exploitation. With the verses "When the fifth sun sets, get back, reclaim / Tha spirit of Cuauhtémoc, alive an untamed", "People of the Sun" evokes a key Indigenous cosmological-epistemic construction. Throughout the lyrics, the interweaving of violent events of imperial operation, historical and current, calls for the reclaiming of said history, rendering possible the articulation of a critique of the colonial/modern system while echoing Indigenous cosmovisions.

On a similar vein, Decolonial Feminist philosopher María Lugones denounces the abovementioned Eurocentric normative chronopolitics:

> Europe came to be mythically conceived as preexisting colonial, global, capitalism and as having achieved a very advanced level in the continuous, linear, unidirectional path. Thus, from within this mythical starting point, other human inhabitants of the planet came to be mythically conceived not as dominated through conquest, nor as inferior in terms of wealth or political power, but as an anterior stage in the history of the species, in this unidirectional path. (LUGONES, 2008, p. 4).

Positioned in a realm of primitivity in this mythological unidirectional path, the anachronized subject has, thus, a colonial wound. Walter Mignolo's conceptualization of the colonial wound (MIGNOLO, 2007, p. 24) has been discussed in Chapter 3: a sense of the modern/colonial fracture, a sense of racial displacement that is addressed, for instance, in W.E.B. Du Bois's notion of double consciousness, or Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness as regards the borderlands: "The U.S.-Mexican border *es una herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country—a border culture" (1987, p. 3). In Fanon (*Black Skins, White Masks*, 1952) it is a sense of suffocation: "It is not because the Indo-Chinese has discovered a culture of his own that he is in revolt. It is because 'quite simply' it was, in more than one way, becoming impossible for him to breathe" (2008, p. 176). What these different treatments of the same concept appear to share in common is the reference to the continuity of pain, the suffering, the dislocation, the after-effect (e.g. bleeding, loss of breath) of an event. The event itself, the *strike*, is the Colonial encounter; whereas the open *wound* refers to the Coloniality that follows it.

The infliction of the colonial wound, as Lugones highlights, depended on the inventions of 'race' and 'gender' "in particularly differential ways for Europeans/'whites' and colonized/'non-white' peoples" (LUGONES, 2008, p. 12). Similarly, the fact that the wound remains open has depended on a logic of categorical separation between race and gender—a distortion of their intermeshed nature—, just as the colonial borders of the modern world are sustained by the categorical distinctions, as Anzaldúa puts it, separating *us* from *them*, according to powerful fabrications of normalcy. Borderlands are inhabited far beyond the geographical scope, permeating existence itself: "*Los atravesados* live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulato, the half-breed, the half dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the 'normal'" (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. 3). She verses this *crossing* condition as follows:

> We are the porous rock in the stone *metate*
> squatting on the ground.
> We are the rolling pin, *el maiz y agua*,
> *la masa harina*. *Somos el amasijo*.
> *Somos lo molido en el metate*.
> We are the coma/ sizzling hot,
> the hot *tortilla*, the hungry mouth.
> We are the coarse rock.
> We are the grinding motion,
> the mixed potion, *somos el molcajete*.
> We are the pestle, the *comino, ajo, pimienta*,
> We are the *chile colorado*,
> the green shoot that cracks the rock.
> We will abide. (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. 81-2).

Anzaldúa's standpoint, as illustrated in the verses, is that of a decolonial, Chicana, Feminist, lesbian, activist, *mestiza*, poet, among a multitude of other belongings: these multiple flows of identity reveal the porous, coarse characteristic of bodies that cross. But these bodies are also 'rocks', they (are) also *matter*—as Judith Butler reminds us—, they are in/the 'grinding motion' of resistance, "at a crossroads, a simple mound of earth / a mud shrine for *Eshu*, / *Yoruba* god of indeterminacy" (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. 90). The colonial wound becomes more than a remnant of Colonial oppression; rather, it is a fundamental element in Anzaldúa's mestizo consciousness:

> As a mestiza I have no country, my homeland cast me out; yet all countries are mine because I am every woman's sister or potential lover. (As a lesbian I have no race, my own people disclaim me; but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races.) I am cultureless because, as a feminist, I challenge the collective cultural/ religious male-derived beliefs of Indo-Hispanics and Anglos; yet I am cultured because I am participating in the creation of yet another culture, a new story to explain the world and our participation in it, a new value system with images and symbols that connect us to each other and to the planet. *Soy un amasamiento* , I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joining that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meanings. We are the people who leap in the dark, we are the people on the knees of the gods. In our very flesh, (r)evolution works out the clash of cultures. It makes us crazy constantly, but if the center holds, we've made some kind of evolutionary step forward. *Nuestra alma el trabajo*, the opus, the great alchemical work; spiritual *mestizaje*, a 'morphogenesis,' an inevitable unfolding. We have become the quickening serpent movement. Indigenous like corn, like corn, the *mestiza* is a product of crossbreeding, designed for preservation under a variety of conditions. (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. 80-81)

A body that crosses: the embodiment of the very "act of kneading, of uniting and joining that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meanings" (p. 81). Where else is this exact same potentially found? This same porous, yet resistant attribute?

This god-like indeterminacy; one that has been historically harnessed for dividing, but also cherished for uniting? It is found in the borderlands.

Arguably, the (r)evolutionary act of crossing, embodied "in our very flash" and manifested at "the clash of cultures" theorized by Anzaldúa is echoed in Rage Against the Machine's song "Maria", from their 1999 album *The Battle of Los Angeles*. The song narrates the struggles of a woman crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. The oppressive and indigestible conditions undergone during the process and the harsh conditions of the very weather are manifested in her body; her simultaneously physical and psychological struggle—and the undoing of her dignity—, however, conjures out a site for potentiality and resistance:

> Tha sun ablaze as Maria's foot
> Touches tha surface of sand
> On northern land
> As human contraband […]
> Like cattle she'll cross
> Degree 106
> Sweat and vomit are thrown
> And she prays and suffocates
> Upon tha memories of home
> Of Yanqui guns for blood debts on tha loans
> Of smoldering fields rape rubble and bones
> Of graves hidden trapped up in visions of war
> Of nothing no one nobody no more
> These are her mountains and skies and
> She radiates
> Through history's rivers of blood
> She regenerates
> And like tha sun disappears only to reappear
> She's eternally here
> Her time is near
> Never conquered, but here.

There is no mistaking that Maria is the "inevitable unfolding", that potential sister or lover of Anzaldúa's *mestiza*. Maria finds herself allocated in a position of Colonial oppression/inferiority as she crosses ("As human contraband […] / Like cattle she'll cross" [Rage Against the Machine, 1999]), which exposes the Colonial quality of Modern borders. Conscious of her own temporal and spatial dislocation—the misplacement of her being, the pain of a colonial wound—she, like Fanon's wretched of the earth, *suffocates*. In spite (or rather, because) of this process of undoing of a being, and its production as "a creature of darkness" (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. 81), Maria crosses "Through history's rivers of blood" (RATM, 1999).

In "Maria", similarly to the setting of the fifth sun and the reclaiming of Indigenous history narrativized in "People of the Sun", the cyclic quality of Maya-Mexica temporality

appears to be reinvoked, “and like tha sun disappears only to reappear / She's eternally here / Her time is near / Never conquered, but here” (RATM, 1999). Maria’s ‘time’ remains in perennial contact with the ‘here-now’ of the Mexica, as previously discussed (CONTRERAS GARCÍA, 2013, p. 72). In embodying the refusal of straight temporality, she is unconquered. Her liberation from an anachronic fixation as past prompts the healing of a colonial wound: not only a creature of darkness, but also a creature of light—“She radiates […] / She regenerates […] / She's eternally here […] / Never conquered, but here” (Rage Against the Machine, 1999).

Bodies that cross share with borderlands a common quality as potential sites of resistance. Such resistance (“We are the coarse rock”) exists not *despite* but *because* of their porous condition, the indeterminacy of the multiple flows of identity. Elsewhere,[95] in the light of Anzaldúa’s decolonial theorizing, Lugones has called it “active subjectivity”—an intention of resistance that opposes the modern western conception of agency along with all of its positivistic, singularizing, prescribed ready-made choices, as well as the dichotomies of inferiority/superiority that the colonial borders of our modern world impose. She elucidates that active subjectivity is the transformative process of forming intentions against that grain “in the brooding of one’s own metamorphosis, [„„] growing into a being who can form such intentions is something we do in germinative stasis from within our own multiplicity” (LUGONES, 2005, p. 86).

The potentiality of multiplicity formed in borderlands and in bodies that cross—our at once permeable and resistant condition—is thus, at the core of translocal solidarity among movements and communities of resistance. Lugones articulates her decolonial thinking on these grounds of coalition, highlighting, simultaneously, the multitude inscribed in the racialized/gendered subject, and the multiple, yet shared oppressions imposed by physical and psychological colonial borders of today. Coalitional endeavors among movements of resistance requires interculturality, multilinguality, and a translocal approach to history that opposes the colonial cartographies of the nation state. In her seminar “Indigenous Movements and decolonial feminism”, Lugones calls attention to the powerful fabrications of isolation effected through Coloniality:

[95] LUGONES, María. From Within Germinative Stasis: Creating Active Subjectivity, Resistant Agency. *In: EntreMundos/AmongWorlds*. Palgrave Macmillan US, 2005.

> The most important feature of colonial intrusion is the violent attempt to destroy the communities of those who became colonized and to fragment them as separate and closed to each other. To break down and overcome that attempt to fragment and separate all communities, groups, nations, peoples, pueblos through coalitions that understand them as permeable is the decolonial project that moves me intellectually and politically. The permeability of nations—the counter to the colonial conception of the colonized as property and as beings that have no internal coherence or government—means that each nation flows out in the world and renders other nations and communities impure and are rendered impure by other communities in turn, communities that cohere or are dispersed. Coalition is a radical deepening of that permeability through learning others' ways of living, their spiritual and social relations and longings, their knowledges, their economies, their ecologies towards liberation. (LUGONES, 2014).

Likewise, it is the endeavor of decolonial thinkers, activists and music makers to break with these strategic-and-violent, essentialist-and-nationalist attempts at isolating communities of resistance. The rupture with homogenous categorizations of people and places fundamentally requires a crossing of borders and a denial of hierarchical, oppositional dichotomies. It is a moving together among social—and musical—movements. Although this investigation has so far focused on translocality in hybrid music forms in terms of their discursive and melodic apparatuses, the endeavor—as carried out by Rage Against the Machine in Brazil—is often reinforced through on-stage performance while informed by off-stage activism.

4.6 Por la Tierra y Liberdad: Translocality and "People of the Sun" in Performance

In October 9, 2010, Rage Against the Machine performed live in the SWU ("Starts With You") music festival in Brazil. The edition, which took place in the city of Itu, São Paulo, was the starting point of the festival conceived by publicist Eduardo Fisher. SWU was an event organized with the purpose of conciliating music and different art forms alongside agendas of sustainability and environmental preservation, providing spaces for artistic performances and debates between the artists and the public. Offering over 70 attractions, namely in the genres of rock, hip-hop, and electronic music, the SWU stages (named "Water", "New Sound", "Greenspace", and "Air", where RATM played) caught the eyes and ears of roughly 150 thousand people in front of artists from diverse national and international scenes, from mainstream and independent/underground contexts. Moreover, the Forum of Sustainability provided a space in the event for debates among the general public, artists, and important names involved in causes and institutions linked to environmental protection, as

well as human and animal rights. Campaigns for preservation were conducted with the support of volunteers and NGOs such as Greenpeace, SOS Mata Atlântica, Um Um Teto para Meu País, Waves for Water, Matilha Cultural, Casa do Zezinho, 350.org, Projeto Guri and Fundação Amazonas Sustentável, in a translocal effort. The official website gives information on the mobilizations which took place in 2010 and 2011, and a definition of SWU: "um movimento de conscientização em prol da sustentabilidade que tem o intuito de mobilizar o maior número possível de pessoas em torno da causa, mostrando que, por meio de pequenas ações [...] é possível ajudar a construir um mundo melhor para se viver".[96]

In this context, the performance of Rage Against the Machine (their first in Latin America) figured among the examples of translocal manifestations that took place in the event. The song "People of the Sun", analyzed in this chapter, was the third in RATM's setlist for their SWU show, however, before the song was played, singer Zack de la Rocha walked to the front of the stage, and announced that this song's performance was dedicated to the Landless Workers' Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra, or MST), the largest social movement in Brazil and one of the largest in Latin America, with an estimated membership of 1.5 million people.[97] De la Rocha gripped the microphone and addressed the audience: "Obrigado! This next song goes to the courageous brothers and sisters of the MST, it's called the People of the Sun! La lucha sigue, por la tierra y liberdad!".[98]

The singer's speech, thanking the public in Portuguese, dedicating the song to the MST in English, and invoking the Zapatista Movement's slogan in Spanish, was made as he raised a clenched fist[99] in the air and posed against the background's red star (see Figure 8). The gesture has been historically used as a symbol of solidarity and resistance in social movements and historical events across the globe, such as the Spanish Civil War of 1936 (where it was recurrently used by antifascist republican militias and international brigades), the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City (United Statesian track athletes John Carlos and Tommie Smith protested racism and injustice against Black citizens), and the 2017 Women's March (denouncing the unequal treatment of women by political figures).

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[96] Further information available at: www.swu.com.br/movimento-swu/o-que-e-swu/?iframe=true&width=800&height=420

[97] Further information available at: www.educamaisbrasil.com.br/enem/geografia/mst

[98] A video of RATM's performance of "People of the Sun" in the SWU is available on the official YouTube channel of the MST, through the following link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=KS_q5iZ63Ho

[99] Additional reference to the raised fist is also found in RATM's songs "Know Your Enemy"("Born with insight and a raised fist"), "Wake Up" ("Fist in the air, in the land of hypocrisy"), "Township Rebellion" ("Raise my fist and resist"), from the album Rage Against the Machine; and "Sleep Now in the Fire" ("So raise your fists and march around") from The Battle of Los Angeles.

Fig. 8: De La Rocha's silhouette, displaying the raised fist (live in SWU, 2010). Source: YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzse3tmhzXE)

The understanding of the translocal discursive practice in this performance of "People of the Sun", which foregrounds coalition among the struggles of different social movements—namely in Brazil and in the U.S.-Mexico divide—is potentially enriched by an analyses of song's lyrical content, its official music video, and Rage Against the Machine's militant engagement. As demonstrated in the previous analytical section of this chapter, "People of the Sun" constitutes a musical treatment of sociocultural kind: the history of Colonial violence (physical and epistemic) that has scarred the U.S.-Mexico borderlands is linked to the ongoing effects of imperialist capitalism. The song at once denounces the continuation of such violence through the matrix of power of Coloniality and invokes the 'here-now' of the Mexica, the perennial contact between the time of colonial domination and the time of anti-colonial resistance, positioning itself in the realm of decolonial Chicano politics and culture. Furthermore, the direct engagement of front man Zack de La Rocha with the Zapatista movement and the communities of resistance in Chiapas, informed by his Chicano identity and activism on and off-stage, was also pointed out in the discussion of Rage Against the Machine's translocal commitment.

During his fourth visit to Chiapas, Mexico, rejoining the Zapatistas, De La Rocha spoke in an interview about his participation in the movement:

> My interest in this struggle has to do with my personal experiences, with my roots, my family. My father is a Chicano muralist. He belonged to the group "Los Four", the only Mexican group that had an exhibition at the Los Angeles Art Museum. His attempts at trying to build bridges between the artists in Los Angeles, the workers, and Chicanos against Vietnam, led me politically towards the National Liberation movements. Also, my Sinaloan grandfather was a revolutionary fighter who fought in the Mexican Revolution. My grandfather went to the United States as an economic migrant. He was an agricultural laborer in Silicon Valley, California. His working days lasted from 15 to 16 hours daily, sweating and subjected to poverty... I see his experience reflected in the testimonies of the Zapatistas, the indigenous peasant rebels who struggle every day to make a living. I experienced the terror.[100]

In the statement, De La Rocha also highlights the coalitional efforts of his father, Robert "Beto" de La Rocha—through the Chicano artistic group "Los Four", in "attempts at trying to build bridges between the artists in Los Angeles, the workers, and Chicanos against Vietnam"—, and his grandfather, Isaac de La Rocha Beltrán, who fought in the Mexican Revolution and eventually migrated to the U.S., where he worked arduously as an agricultural laborer. The experiences of Zack de La Rocha's family fueled his political engagement as an artist and activist, and he saw their reflection in the fights of the EZLN throughout the 1990s. The impacts of this translocal standpoint in De La Rocha's activism, artistic career, and in the music of RATM was also addressed by the singer in the interview, as he voiced his aim to ensure "the governments of the US and Mexico that despite strategies of fear and intimidation to foreigners, despite their weapons, despite their immigration laws and military reserves, they'll never be able to isolate the Zapatista communities from the people in the US", an endeavor carried out through music and numerous campaigns.

Zack de La Rocha also clarified that his experiences in the Mexican state of Chiapas inspired him to write back in the United States, namely through the songs "People of the Sun", "Wind Below", and "Without a Face", from Rage Against the Machine's second album, *Evil Empire*. Accordingly, in understanding his dedication of "People of the Sun" to the Brazilian Landless Workers' Movement during RATM's performance in the SWU music festival, it is important to readdress the song's lyrics.

As mentioned previously, the initial verses "Since 1516, minds attacked and overseen / Now crawl amidst the ruins of this empty dream" (RATM, 1996) position the song's discursive practice in the temporal and geographical context of Spanish colonization in Mexico. Shortly before this period, the history of Colonial Brazil had also begun (marked by

[100] DE LA ROCHA, Zack. [Interview given to] Jesus Ramirez Cuevas. Music Fan Clubs,1998. Available at: http://www.musicfanclubs.org/rage/articles/frontera.htm. Accessed on: 17 dec. 2021.

the arrival of the Portuguese in 1500). Additionally, the lines connect the violence of Colonialism (e.g. systematic oppression of Indigenous peoples) and capitalist exploitation in the modern U.S.-borderlands—arguably, with a critique of the so-called American dream. As Donna Alexander discusses, it is "inspired by the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, [taking] the reader on a transnational and transtemporal journey across time and space. The song traces a history of violence from the sixteenth century to present day Mexico and *America*" (ALEXANDER, 2012, p. 17, emphasis added). Although the author refers here to the United States, rather than the American continent, the colonial histories of Mexico and Brazil both began in the early sixteenth century and involved the brutality of forced labor imposed on Indigenous peoples. In Brazil, however, limitations regarding Indigenous workforce—mainly in terms of resistance, as well as the countless deaths caused by physical violence and the spread of diseases brought by the colonial invaders—led the Portuguese empire to use predominantly African slave work from the mid-16th Century on.[101]

It is worth noting that in dedicating the song "People of the Sun" to the Brazilian Landless Workers' movement while invoking the Zapatista slogan "La lucha sigue, por la tierra y liberdad", Rage Against the Machine have taken this "transnational and transtemporal journey", as Alexander puts it, to a new level. Firstly, the band called for a transtemporal understanding of the current challenges faced by both social movements (the MST and the Zapatistas) in relation to their respective colonial histories in Brazil and Mexico while denouncing the myth of progress that is inscribed in Western-straight temporality. Secondly, the band has compelled us to perceive, in the light of translocal solidarity, that those challenges are shared to some extent, despite their specific geopolitics. Such coalition constitutes a key decolonial endeavor, as Lugones reminds us, as it unsettles the colonial cartographies of the nation state.

[101] Rafael de Bivar Marquese discusses the transition from Indigenous to African slavery in Colonial Brazil, explaining that the "manpower engaged in constructing the Brazilian sugar mills had been predominantly indigenous. Some of this indigenous workforce (recruited at Jesuit settlements on the coast) received paid wages, though the majority was submitted to slavery. The first African slaves were imported in the mid-16th Century, though these were mostly employed in specialist activities at the Brazilian mills, which meant they were more expensive than their Amerindian counterparts […]. After 1560, with the various epidemics that hit the Brazilian coast (such as measles and smallpox), the Indian slaves began to die in such alarmingly high numbers that the workforce at the mills required constant replenishment. The following decade, under pressure from the Jesuits, the Crown partially proscribed the enslavement of Indians. At the same time, the Portuguese were fine-tuning the functioning of their transatlantic slave trade, especially with the conquest of Angola towards the end of the 17th Century" ("The dynamics of slavery in Brazil - Resistance, the slave trade and manumission in the 17th to 19th centuries" Marquese 5).

The verses “Wit their borders and boots on top of us / Pullin’ knobs on the floor of their toxic metropolis” further elaborate the song’s critique of current imperialist government policies in Coloniality. As Alexander proposes, they address the physical divide alongside “the racial, class and gender borders imposed by the dominant culture. The ‘boots on top of us’ is a reference to the violent tactics of the border patrol as well as police and military brutality. The ‘toxic metropolis’ bespeaks of the noxious nature of physical partitions” (p. 17). In highlighting the physical and psychological borders on the landscape of society, the author echoes Gloria Anzaldúa’s decolonial border thinking, as discussed previously in this chapter: “The psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands and the spiritual borderlands are not particular to the Southwest. In fact, the Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory” (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. ix). Thus, Anzaldúa’s borderlands theory potentially expands the view of the landscape of society (in the context of the Texas-U.S. Southwest/Mexican border) to different borders across the globe, enriching the scope of translocality: the understanding of borders as having dialogues within and between different places.

Accordingly, the quoted verses from “People of the Sun” become emblematic of Rage Against the Machine’s dedication of the song to the MST. The movement’s emergence in the mid-1980s followed over one hundred years of popular resistance against the outcomes of Law 601 (the Landed Property Act of 1850).[102] Known simply as Lei de Terras, it was passed in the same year as the Eusérbio de Queirós Law (or the official abolishment of international slave trade in Brazil). However, the effects of the former consolidated the concentration of land ownership in Brazil, and the latter had no real impact on the country’s widespread slavery, which lasted until 1888 (the latest in the Western world; large landholdings, historically favored by Lei de Terras, still maintained slave work well into the early 20th Century). In this context, the MST has been organized around core initiatives that include: “Lutar pela Terra; Lutar por Reforma Agrária; Lutar por uma sociedade mais justa [buscando solucionar] problemas estruturais do nosso país, como a desigualdade social e de renda, discriminação de etnia e gênero, concentração da comunicação, exploração do trabalhador”.[103] Facing opposition and offensives from landowners and a dominant agribusiness, the movement has commonly operated under strategies of occupation aimed at unproductive land across all the Brazilian states (the MST claims the legitimacy of these occupations according

[102] Further information on “Lei de Terras” available at: http://www.mst.org.br/nossa-historia.
[103] http://www.mst.org.br/objetivos.

to Article 5, item XXIII, of the Brazilian Constitution, which establishes that land—or rural property—must fulfill its social function). Like the EZLN in the Mexican state of Chiapas, the main body of the MST is mostly constituted of rural members and families, and both social movements have resisted periodic attacks that are at times ignored and at other times promoted by the national governments of Brazil and Mexico. In readdressing Rage Against the Machine's song "People of the Sun" (whose lyrics were inspired by the Zapatistas and later dedicated to the Landless Workers), the line "Wit their borders and boots on top of us" can be understood as a reference to the violent opposition faced by the two groups, in a coalitional perspective of their fights.

The verses that follow—"Pullin' knobs on the floor of their toxic metropolis / But how you gonna get what you need ta get? / Tha gut eaters, blood drenched get offensive like Tet"—highlight the agrarian reforms urged by the rural workers of the EZLN and the MST alike, as both movements have put forth sustainable agriculture[104] in the face of an expanding, noxious agribusinesses and wide-ranging capitalist exploitation. In this sense, despite being a profitable economic system for the nation state, the gigantic industrial agriculture in Brazil has historically concentrated its wealth in the hands of a handful of owners; the inter-linked consequences of agricultural resource exploitation (including ample deforestation of the Amazon rainforest and the threatening of diverse vegetal and animal species) has alarmingly increased social inequality in the country, also further limiting the politics of demarcation of Indigenous land (discussed in Chapter 3). As Casey Harch argues, in opposition to the industrial, large-scale agricultural exploitation of basic natural resources, the MST has become the largest producer of organic rice in Latin America, and their production is now a "key source of food for schools throughout Brazil, as well as for MST groups. This form of widespread commercialization is distinguishable from the industrial agriculture we know because the wealth produced by every MST plot is shared among hundreds of families" (HARCH, 2019).

On a similar vein, halfway through the song "People of the Sun", the lines "Neva forget that tha whip snapped ya back / Ya spine cracked for tobacco, oh I'm the Marlboro man" bring to the fore the colonial history behind the declining living and work conditions in the fields today. Like the small scale farmers, rural workers, and Indigenous groups in Brazil that have faced the aforementioned challenges stemming from a dominant agribusiness,

[104] Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional. Resistencia Autónoma: Cuaderno de texto de primer grado del curso de La Libertad según l@s Zapatistas. 2013.

Mexican laborers have struggled under the structural violence and health inequalities in the context of a noxious tobacco industry, which includes the atrocities of child labor. In the introduction of her article for *The Guardian*, Nina Lakhani discusses that

> A series of exposés in the 1990s in Mexico revealed widespread use of child labour and banned agrochemicals and detailed abysmal living and work conditions in Nayarit's tobacco fields. . . But during a visit to the Santiago fields in March [2018], the Guardian found that while schemes had improved the situation for some families, there were children working on seven of the 10 plantations visited. Families all spoke of the need to thread as many sartas as possible to make enough money to buy food and save a little to buy fabric for clothes and supplement home-grown crops until next season. Tobacco is one of the toughest harvests, shouldered by only the poorest of the poor migrant families who come generation after generation from as far as Jalisco, Durango and Zacatecas to pick and thread the leaves. The vast majority are indigenous Huichol, Corra, Tepehuan and Mexicanero families. (LAKHANI, 2018).

Lakhani's article denounces that the living and work conditions in the Mexican tobacco fields, uncovered in the 1990s (the decade when Rage Against the Machine released all their full-length studio albums so far), have not effectively improved, which enables us to see that the social criticism articulated in the discursive practice of the song "People of the Sun" remains urgent.

The line "Our past blastin' on through tha verses" is emblematic of the song's transtemporal articulation. As previously discussed, in tracing a history from colonial times to specific, contemporary conjunctures in Chiapas and in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, "People of the Sun" constitutes a historicized critique of imperialist capitalism in the so-called Third World, one that highlights the ongoing structural violence and social inequality experienced in Mexico and Brazil, as reflected in the long struggles of the EZLN and the MST. Both social movements have faced fierce opposition, respectively, of the military and large scale landowners, and have in return resorted to violence on a number of occasions. The Single for "People of the Sun" illustrates this modern/colonial history of resistance. The original photograph, taken in Mexico, 1927, by the Italian photographer Tina Modotti[105] displays the corn (one of the foremost domesticated plants of the Americas), the reaping-hook, and an ammunition belt (see Figure 9). The song's appropriation of the photograph arguably constitutes a reference to key elements, old and new, in the landscape of Mexican society: Indigenous agriculture in the corn crops, and the Zapatista struggle against recurrent military offensives in Chiapas.

[105] Further information available at: http://www.comitatotinamodotti.it/ctm.htm

Fig. 9: Cover art of the single *People of the Sun* (1996). Source: Discogs (https://www.discogs.com)

Accordingly, the official music video for "People of the Sun" draws on the Zapatista revolution. Its initial frame displays a flag with the image of Emiliano Zapata, leader of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 against the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, as a background for the phrase "In 1994 the Zapatista army rose up demanding an end to the PRI—the US-backed Mexican dictatorship".[106] The image is screened on a wall, across which stands a young Mexican man, staring blankly at the projection, in a morgue room where a few deceased Indigenous individuals lie. Quick black-and-white clips (taken from Serguei Eisenstein's unfinished film *¡Que viva México!*, 1979) displaying Mayan monuments, Indigenous men, and Christian priests holding skulls are interwoven with photographs of Zapatista soldiers, while the members of Rage Against the Machine are shown playing the song "People of the Sun". The projected flash images show dozens of phrases every second, some of which are taken from a report written by an activist named Jenna in Chiapas, 1994, including the line "A majority of the Mayan Indians here live in wood slat and mud houses with dirt floors".[107] An in-depth analysis of the music video would require a chapter on its own, but at this point it should suffice to note that the aforesaid visual elements, on a similar vein to the song lyrics, enrich the understanding of a transtemporal social criticism embodied in "People of the Sun",

[106] The official video for "People of the Sun" is available on YouTube through the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scyC9A6o_Ts
[107] The full report can be found at: http://struggle.ws/mexico/reports/back94.html

linking the current struggles of the Zapatista movement with a history of anti-colonial revolutions in Mexico.

4.7 Take the Power Back: Final Remarks

This chapter has aimed at discussing key elements of Chicano politics and culture—namely in terms of the identification and engagement with Indigenous groups and their current struggles—that are present in the music of Rage Against the Machine, along with an analysis of translocal solidarity articulated by the group in on and off-stage activism. The analysis of discursive and melodic apparatuses of the song "People of the Sun" emphasizes the articulation of coalition between Chicano and African-American cultural manifestations, namely through the commitment to hip-pop elements in RATM's hybrid Metal music (they were pioneers in consistently incorporating and re-shaping both genres throughout their entire musical career).

Moreover, the evoking of Indigenous episteme in an anti-anachronistic approach to time that is displayed throughout the song, connecting historical events to present conditions of Coloniality, potentially reinforces the identification between Chicano voices and the Indigenous. It was demonstrated that both discursively and aurally "People of the Sun" conveys a departure from the Western, linear notion of past, present, and future, and the Eurocentric mythological fabrication of progress—a fabrication that has long sustained nationalist paradigms in several Latin American countries.

On the whole, "People of the Sun" is emblematic of Rage Against the Machine's translocal political commitment, addressed here in the context of their iconic performance at the SWU festival, in Brazil, where the song was dedicated to the MST (the photos below were taken in the occasion).[108] The endeavor echoes a coalitional approach to the imposing Colonial borders of our 'Modern' world, as pointed out in the decolonial border thinking of Anzaldúa and Lugones, unsettling the isolating, essentialist cartographies of the nation state. It is worth noting that, as a band from the early 1990s, Rage Against the Machine emerged during the rise of neoliberal thought. A cultural analysis of this period would lead us to look at it in hindsight, tracing potential connections with current political conjunctures across Latin

[108] Further information is available at: http://www.mst.org.br/2016/05/20/tom-morello-sauda-o-mst-e-protesta-contra-o-golpe-no-brasil.html

America—the relevance of the band's discursive practices and coalitional efforts for the political landscape of Brazil today cannot be overstated.

Fig. 10: Tom Morello wears the MST cap. De La Rocha holds the MST flag. Source: Brasil247 (www.brasil247.com)

5. CHAPTER V – *OUTRO*: ALONG MUSICAL ROOTS AND ROUTES

> "Music, the grudging gift that supposedly compensated slaves not only for their exile from the ambiguous legacies of practical reason but for their complete exclusion from modern political society, has been refined and developed so that it provides an enhanced mode of communication beyond the petty power of words—spoken or written"
>
> **Paul Gilroy - *The Black Atlantic***

5.1 …Of Movement

The musical journeys we have been on are endless, and the brief story told through these chapters provides but a glimpse of the vast constellations composed by distinct, yet converging musical *movements*—this is a proper term, as it encompasses not only conglomerates of subcultures, musical scenes, and the various networking and political practices uniting and informing them (e.g. the hip hop and heavy metal movements), but also the dynamics of *moving* which has characterized the emergence, the crossing of borders, the crystallization and the hybridity of/among music genres across the globe. The historicity of hip hop and heavy metal has been approached here with a focus on how these distinct musical movements have been informed by (and how they can also inform, as has been suggested) the sociopolitical struggles of likewise distinct marginalized groups, such as the predominantly Black Brazilian Southeastern peripheries, Northern Indigenous groups, members and families of the MST across the country, and even the communities of resistance in Chiapas, Mexico—whose geographic distance from our social landscape does not illustrate the proximity and mutuality of a long journey of resistance against the ongoing, global-reaching operations of an essentially colonial matrix of power.

Just as the separation between heavy metal and hip hop has been questioned, in terms of their translocal origins, shared counter-powers, and history of collaboration, so has the separation between art, politics, and life itself—this, of course, is nothing new: it has been done marvelously in the literature of W.E.B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, and Glória Anzaldua, for instance, in countless popular music forms born from the Blues, and across a multitude of different art incarnations.

When political struggles are tackled through cultural forms, including literacy (to which the doors remain closed for a large portion of the marginalized communities addressed here) and song (still the most democratic and communitarian form of art and communication), it is done so through the particularities of what Paul Gilroy calls "specific experiences of unfreedom" (GILROY, 1993, p. 123). Drawing on Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* and approaching popular music from the history of Black Atlantic creativity, Gilroy argues that the musical treatment of political struggles oftentimes

> involves a deliberate and self-conscious move beyond language in ways that are informed by the social memory of earlier experiences of enforced separation from the world of written communication. A countercultural sense of the inability of mere words to convey certain truths inaugurates a special indictment of modernity's enforced separation of art and life as well as a distinct aesthetic (or *anti-aesthetic*) standpoint. Music is the best way of examining this final aspect. (GILROY, 1993, p. 123-4, emphasis added).

Interestingly, hip hop and heavy metal musics share special qualities in regards to this 'anti-aesthetic' standpoint. When we consider the context of formation, reproduction and circulation of hip hop music, from its reworking of Afro-Caribbean and U.S. styles to its appropriation in Brazil (discussed in Chapter 2), we see that it crucially involved an alternative, countercultural approach to the voice as an instrument. Rapping as we know it today inherits from West-African oral traditions of the griots and Jamaican toasting; its conventional speech-like quality, vocal agility, and focus on rhythm and beats rather than on tonal melodic fluctuations opposes the clean, lyrical, at times operatic singing attribute of most popular and 'art' Western music of the early 20th Century. Furthermore, hip hop's palimpsestic nature, which encompasses not only the musical interplays of R&B and Jamaican sound system apparatuses, but also the creative hybrid dynamics of sampling, has from its outset unsettled purist/essentialist paradigms permeating Western music, especially in terms of music 'virtuosity' and copyright. On a similar vein, heavy metal, through its traditional emphasis on noise, speed and distortion—taken to a radical level with the formation of Extreme Metal subgenres—constitutes what Barchi calls '(anti)music', or the sonic embodiment of Metal's embrace of aggression and insurrection. Since the mid-1980s, the spread of local scenes focused on musical (re)constructions of place and culture (explored in Chapter 3) is a reflection of heavy metal tranlocality: the rise of "nomadic war machines" (BARCHI, 2016, p. 270).

In moving beyond the realm of written and spoken words, music has the innate, countercultural potentiality to convey, through the spark of aesthetic sensibility, truths of

political dissensus and disillusion, but also truths of utopic expressivity that are necessary for social change—we need to look beyond the fixed horizon of our social landscape, and to break free from the idea of textual totality, or as Gilroy puts it, the ideology of "textuality as a mode of communicative practice which provides a model for all other forms of cognitive exchange and social interaction" (1993, p. 77). Aside from all that it leaves out (including the role of Affect, Intentionality, and Phenomenology, among many other things), this study on music also denounces its own insufficiency in being *written*, in *speaking* of a musical language that eludes it. Nevertheless, I have invited you, the attentive reader, to listen to the different pieces of music addressed here, via audio platforms of reasonably easy access, hence this written text can be qualified through your own active role in interpreting the numerous song passages and quotations mentioned so far (and contrasting them with mine), as well as in listening to and contemplating their soundscapes—this dynamics, in itself, reveals that listening to music essentially opposes passivity. It also reveals the active role of music: it is not an object, it has its own active subjectivity; it informs, affects, moves and shapes us in furtive ways far beyond the scope of our aesthetic sensibility and vulnerability. I hope that the music that has seized us here has—along with the outcomes of our own interactions with it—partially supplied the insufficiency of the illustrations and analyses brought forward in this written text.

5.2 …Of Matter

It is worth noting that there are key points of similarity between the musics of the main artists addressed in this dissertation; namely, Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa, and Rage Against the Machine were all pioneers in their specific musical expressions. Racionais MC's were the Brazilian originators of what Derek Purdue calls 'marginal hip hop', that is, hip hop music that is centered on issues of locality, which often translates into locally-specified denunciations of "police violence, precarious living conditions, racial discrimination, homicide related to drug trafficking, and police and general state corruption" (PARDUE, 2008, p. 6-7) as effects of systematic exploitation and control of the nation state, manifested daily in the milieu of Brazilian *periferia*. This trend differs from the approach of 'positivist hip hoppers', whose focus on Evangelical and Afro-centric discourses, highlighting "unlimited frontiers", convey a certain kind of universalist ideal (p. 26), oftentimes

unsuspicious of the effects of globalization. Nevertheless, these are essentially umbrella terms for addressing the emergence of national hip hop, and Pardue clarifies that even hip hoppers categorized in the same trend (re)articulate marginality in very different ways. Racionais MC's' dynamic usage of sampling, as carried out in the album *Sobrevivendo no Inferno*, draws on both U.S. and Brazilian music of different genres, reinforcing a sense of musical translocality. The folk metal band Arandu Arakuaa were the first in Brazil to predominantly incorporate Indigenous languages in metal music; moreover, their prioritizing of regional—especially Northeastern—and Indigenous instrumentation in contrast to the heavy metal component constitutes in itself a priority shift in the hierarchical organization of traditional folk metal hybridity. Even in the context of their fellow metal bands comprising the movement Levante do Metal Nativo, Arandu Arakuaa's musical treatment of locality and Indigeneity has been distinctively meticulous and consistent, as well as increasingly more present with each release. As an influential exponent in the convergence of both hip hop and metal musical cultures, Rage Against the Machine were the first band to ubiquitously unite both styles while occupying the mainstream. The rap-metal renegades have likewise drawn on key political struggles of Indigenous, Chicano/as and Black groups in the United States and beyond—singer Zack de La Rocha's campaigning in Chiapas, Mexico, was approached here in terms of the shared struggles between their communities of resistance and the Brazilian MST, brought to the fore by Zack himself during the band's performance in the state of São Paulo at the SWU festival (their first in Latin America).

Still, the positioning of these groups as pioneers is not as important as their creative dynamics of musical appropriation of different forms and styles, some locally-based, some of global reach, and how these interplays have been informed by specific contexts of sociopolitical resistance—different histories that nonetheless share a colonial wound. The musics of Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa, and RATM potentially enrich our understanding of places and margins, and how we relate to them closely or from great distances; in this sense, their musics echo, through discursive and melodic apparatuses, Anzaldúa's conception of the Borderlands as "physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy" (ANZALDÚA, 1987). Much of the tension manifested in these distant yet similar borderlands (in Brazilian *periferia* marked by state neglect, in Indigenous communities struggling in face of land dispossession, in the U.S.-Mexico divide and in Chiapas, where racialized groups are

plagued at once by two nation states) can be traced to a colonial wound that remains open, bleeding through racial segregation, through the memory of systematic exploitation, through new forms of unfreedom. When Racionais MC's emphasize that the periphery is everywhere ("Periferia é periferia (em qualquer lugar). Gente pobre / Periferia é periferia. Vários botecos abertos, várias escolas vazias / Periferia é periferia. E a maioria por aqui se parece comigo"), when Arandu Arakuaa remind us that land appropriation is not exclusively a local issue ("Tem que ter mata virgem pro espirito proteger: Parte do saber continua, espíritos resistem / Até os invasores precisam da terra / Sem ela não há vida, sem ela não há harmonia"), when Rage Against the Machine expose that borders inflict similar wounds across the globe ("'Cause for Raza livin in La La, Is like Gaza on to tha dawn of Intifada / Reach for tha lessons tha masked pass on, And seize tha metropolis / It's you that it's built on"), they are singing the same language—the language of coalition and translocal solidarity. These verses constitute, at once, narratives of loss and rescue, and retell shared histories of resistance, bringing the residues of its social memory into fold. Through their discursive musical practices, Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa and Rage Against the Machine potentially redirect the consciousness of racialized groups towards alternative ways of learning and living, towards liberation from the various colonial borders inscribed in our modern world. The renewal of tradition is understood alongside the renewal of identity: mutability and permeability become catalysts for coalition.

Their coalitional efforts are also manifested in continuous campaigns of activism. Namely, Racionais MC's, aside from their history of partnerships with *posses* and other peripheral organizations, have consistently engaged in educational campaigns across Southern São Paulo (often working alongside the NGO Capão Cidadão).[109] Rage Against the Machine's militant campaigning, which includes Zack de La Rocha's activities and Chiapas, has been directed mainly towards the political agenda of Indigenous and Black racialized groups, denouncing their subjugation under systematic illegal border violence and the recurrent constitutional failings of the United States prison system (as discussed in the previous chapter). Arandu Arakuaa have recently participated and performed[110] at the politico-cultural manifestation 2ª Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas, which took place in September 2021, in the federal capital Brasília. Under the theme 'Indigenous Women:

[109] Further information available at: https://admin.sindsep-sp.org.br/noticias/outras-secretarias/violencia-policial-ressalta-preconceito-social-contra-negros-da-periferia/

[110] Arandu Arakuaa - Îasy (Live) at 2ª Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDcpaObPB-o

Reforesting Minds for the Healing of the Earth', the protest constitutes a crucial chapter in a long fight for better politics of demarcation of Indigenous land, and opposes the ongoing legal proposition of "Marco Temporal" (which further restricts the already crippled rights to land of Indigenous groups).

Arandu Arakuaa's activism alongside Indigenous women points to a more intersectional approach (CRENSHAW, 1989; LUGONES, 2008) towards the treatment of social identities (in this case, gender, aside from the overall focus of these artists on "race", ethnicity and social class) and their assemblage under the wide-ranging repression of different systems of power. Moreover, in contrast to the male-dominated, heterocentric cultures of both heavy metal and hip hop—and to the all-male line-up of Racionais MC's and Rage Against the Machine—, Arandu Arakuaa have from their outset been a female-fronted band.

Fig. 11: From left to right: Andressa Barbosa, Zândhio Huku, João Mancha, and Guilherme Cezário, peforming at 2ª Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas, in 2021. Source: YouTube (www.youtube.com)

Nonetheless, as illustrated by the campaigning and political activism of these artists on and off-stage, the domains of public, sociopolitical interaction far exceed the scope of musical releases (especially in the context of heavy metal and hip, expressive cultures marked by their underground, alternative scenes, and the various networking practices informing them). Namely, Arandu Arakuaa have figured in and supported the Indigenous multimedia production of Rádio Yandé (Brazil's first webcast radio station), a leading platform in ethnomedia[111] whose programming includes musical production as well as educational

[111] Comunicação e Etnomídia Indígena: https://radioyande.com/a-radio.php

debates brought to the forefront by Indigenous representatives and guests, centered on Indigenous politics, art, cultures and languages. Similarly, Racionais MC's' main songwriter Mano Brown has his own podcast, made available through the Spotify audio and streaming platform. In *Mano a Mano*, the rapper has interviewed prominent women such as former president Dilma Rousseff, singer and politician Leci Brandão, Feminist philosopher Djamila Ribeiro, actress Taís Araújo, rapper Gloria Groove, journalist Glória Maria, as well as singer-songwriters Ludmilla, Karol Conká and Jojo Todynho, with debates on politics, music, culture, society, technology, among other subjects. The predominant participation of women guests in Mano Brown's program, along with Racionais MC's' revision of their own lyrical content in terms of gender issues and sexist overtones (which has culminated in the exclusion of early songs from their setlist in live performances, such as "Mulheres Vulgares", from the 1990 debut album *Holocausto Urbano*) indicate that group has been able to resignify or at the very least tackle ideological aspects of hip hop 'attitude' and 'consciousness' (which awkwardly persist from the movement's outset) that are particularly problematic, not only in terms of the neglect of gender-based violence, but of violence undergone by women of color and also based on marginalized sexual orientations, taking place daily in Brazilian peripheries and across the country. Rage Against the Machine have performed in support of activist organizations such as Women Alive (an NGO run by and for women living with HIV/AIDS), with full donations of net earnings; furthermore, in terms of lyrical content, the group has been more attentive to gender-based issues in relation to the previous two, as illustrated in the songs "Maria" (its narrativization of the twofold oppression undergone by a woman crossing the U.S.-Mexico border has been addressed in the previous chapter) and "Revolver"—this one off the album *Evil Empire*, and whose irony-laden lyrics constitute a lengthy denunciation of domestic violence, as conveyed in the verses:

> His spit is worth more than her work
> Pass the purse to the pugilists
> He's a prizefighter
> And he bought rings and he owns kin
> And now he's swingin'
> And now he's the champion
> Hey revolver, don't mothers make good fathers?
> Revolver!
> A spotless domain
> Hides festering hopes she's certain there's more
> Pictures of fields without fences
> Her body numbs as he approaches the door
> As he approaches the door
> Hey revolver, don't mothers make good fathers?
> Revolver! (RATM, 1996).

These are few examples that nonetheless indicate that Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa, and Rage Against the Machine have brought to the fore countercultural, critical accounts in the scope of the male-dominated music movements in which these groups belong—movements that to a large extent mirror the predominance of misogyny in our essentially patriarchal society. Theirs is a countercultural move in the sense that it shifts from and stands in opposition to a long tradition of power hierarchies persistently present in both hip hop and heavy metal cultures. Thus, these groups show that the pathways of hip hop and heavy metal are being continuously reconfigured through musical hybridity, translocal solidarity, as well as linguistic and cultural interconnections.

Out travels have taken us from the translocal origins of hip hop and heavy metal (both have debts to the Blues) to their trajectories of appropriations in the Global South. Each genre has evolved according to its own specific geopolitics of musical hybridity, carrying out its own crossing of physical and cultural borders. Namely, hip hop's diasporic, Afro-Caribbean roots have spread across the Americas and beyond, giving rise to musical and cultural associations among distinct yet connected peripheral communities. We have also seen how heavy metal's working class, post-World War II milieu in England comprised the multicultural outcomes of continuous waves of migration, and that musically speaking, heavy metal assimilated other genres, such as blues/rock and psychedelic music being made in America. Deepening the style's mutability, the emergence of subgenres such as folk metal was grounded on particular issues of locality and culture, with a drastic redesigning of melodic apparatuses and linguistic conventions for the musical treatment of place and identity. The musics of Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa and Rage Against the Machine are living proof that the pathways of hip hop and heavy metal have never been monocultural or monolithic (contrary to essentialist claims that often manifest in music scenes); rather, they are filled with crossroads.

The numerous processes of mutation and circulation of these musics—their continuous crossing of borders—have involved, simultaneously, the memory of traditions and the creation of traditions anew. In this sense, they become illustrative of what Gilroy calls a 'shift' from the chronotope of the road to "the chronotope of the crossroads" (GILROY, 1993, p. 199). Similarly, in the previous chapter, music's crossing of borders has been understood as a potential analogy for 'bodies that cross': in questioning paradigms of essentialism and their easy dichotomies, under the light of Anzaldúa's border thinking and Lugones's notion of

active subjectivity, we can approach music expression as a means to move "away from away from the border—into the Borderlands" (LUGONES, 2005, p. 86).

The musical subcultures of hip hop and heavy metal (as expressed in the works of Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa and Rage Against the Machine) play a special role in moving towards this direction. On the one hand, their music is informed by and retells histories of borrowings and displacement (the hybrid attribute of these musical forms is not merely a metaphor for the fragmented, intercultural and translocal dynamics of diaspora; rather, it is a result). On the other hand, these musical subcultures consistently rely on and invoke living legacies of Indigenous, Black, and Chicano/a traditions, and are gravely concerned with "race" and ethnicity. Hip hop and heavy metal translocal dynamics are not synonymous with rootlessness. Their shape-shifting, permeable musical forms are the embodiment of relentless, resistant, living diasporic cultures. These subcultures are 'movement(s)', but they (are) also 'matter'—they move, and they matter. They sing of *and* from Anzaldúa's simultaneously physical, cultural, and psychological borderlands: "We are the coarse rock. We are the grinding motion" (1987, p. 81).

In their songs and activism on and off-stage, these artists have been consistently attentive to tradition, but also to the both local and global flows and dimensions of diaspora. Brazilian hip hoppers often draw on the anti-colonial legacy of Afro-Brazilian leaders like Zumbi dos Palmares; Folk Metal members of Levante do Metal Nativo and Extreme Metal bands such as Miasthenia have likewise incorporated linguistic, cultural, cosmological and aesthetic elements of different Indigenous groups in their musical performances, bringing their histories of struggle into fold; in the rap-metal of Rage Against the Machine, the numerous references to Indigenous communities of resistance and the Black Panther leaders continuously remind us that the scope for resistance must be coalitional in the face of ongoing, wide-spread racialized violence and segregation, in and beyond the U.S.-Mexico border:

> So now I'm rollin' down Rodeo wit a shotgun
> These people ain't seen a brown skin man
> Since their grandparents bought one […]
> The structure is set ya neva change it with a ballot pull
> In tha ruins there's a network for tha toxic rock
> School yard ta precinct, suburb ta project block
> Bosses broke south for new flesh and a factory floor
> The remains left chained to the powder war […]
> Bare witness to tha sickest shot while suckas get romantic
> They ain't gonna send us campin' like they did my man Fred Hampton
> Still we lampin' still clockin' dirt for our sweat

> A ballots dead so a bullet's what I get
> A thousand years they had tha tools
> We should be takin' 'em.

Music—approached here "as a changing rather than an unchanging same" (GILROY, p. 101)—sings the language of the crossroads, of the borderland, "this vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary [and] in a constant state of transition" (ANZALDÚA, 1987, p. 3). It is in this potentiality to break free from the fixation of bodies, of ways of being, belonging, saying, learning, and longing, that music constitutes a counter-power against the narrowness of normalcy, against the essentially colonial mapping and positioning of human lives.

The foregrounding of hip hop and heavy metal translocality compels us to challenge totalizing presumptions of tradition (e.g. essentialist paradigms) as well as the abstract, oftentimes elitist and academicist plurality of the so-called postmodern present (e.g. anti-essentialism). Whereas the former position often culminates in discourses and practices of absolute 'truth' in the domains of nationalism, authenticity, and 'purity', the latter tends to ignore urgent questions of racial, class, gender-based oppression, of ethnic and social identities, as well as cultural politics that have been brought forth in this investigation (i.e. in ignoring 'race', the anti-essentialist pole tends to also ignore racism and its brutal effects). Although both positions pose problems in the individual scope of self and subjectification, and in the wider possibilities of community and society, Gilroy proposes that we use music "as a model that can break the deadlock between the two unsatisfactory positions" (1993, p. 99), and brings Black cultural politics into consideration:

> Both positions are represented in contemporary discussions of black music, and both contribute to staging a conversation between those who see the music as the primary means to explore critically and reproduce politically the necessary ethnic essence of blackness and those who would dispute the existence of any such unifying, organic phenomenon. The first option typically identifies music with tradition and cultural continuity. Its conservatism is sometimes disguised by the radical nature of its affirmative political rhetoric and by its laudable concern with the relationship between music and the memory of the-past. […] 'It's a Black thing you wouldn't understand' […]. This exceptionalist position shares elitism and contempt for black popular culture with the would-be postmodem pragmatism which routinely and inadequately opposes it. Something of the spirit of the second 'anti-essentialist' perspective is captured in the earlier but equally historic black vernacular phrase 'Different strokes for different folks'. This notional pluralism is misleading. Its distaste for uncomfortable questions of class and power makes political calculation hazardous if not impossible. This second position refers pejoratively to the first as racial essentialism. It moves towards a casual and arrogant deconstruction of blackness while ignoring the appeal of the first position's powerful, populist affirmation of black culture. (GILROY, 1993, p. 100).

Gilroy also argues that, ironically, neither position takes music very seriously: “both forsake discussion of music and its attendant dramaturgy, performance, ritual, and gesture in favour of an obsessive fascination with the bodies of the performers themselves” (1993, p. 101). We have seen that the emergence of hip hop in the United States from Afro-Caribbean forms, its appropriation in Brazil, and its crystallization as a musical culture of global reach were grounded on transnational structures and musical treatments of locality (the same can be said in regards to locally-based Metal forms, namely in Extreme Metal scenes that were established in the Global South). Although these musical circulations involved the intricate dynamics of intercultural and material exchange, they also relied, as previously mentioned, on the rescuing of local traditions and languages that have been systematically erased since Colonial times and into ongoing Coloniality—this countercultural endeavor has been approached here as a form of musical healing, drawing on decolonial perspectives; a healing that is only possible through the serious comprehension and treatment of the lived particularities and experiences of marginalized groups. Black and Indigenous cultural traditions have resisted this modern/colonial process of erasure through similar (but by no means identical), markedly oral, artistic and technological processes of (re)organization and (re)designing of cultural traditions. Their strategies for cultural survival, against the odds of hegemonic historicity, thus unsettle the totalizing ideology of textuality as model for the articulation of social and political experience.

In light of these considerations, this dissertation constitutes an attempt to conjure up new, alternative ways to approach music movements as potential catalysts for the redesigning of our conceptions of the social fabric. The endeavor stems fundamentally from the interconnectedness and tension between musical roots and routes and the multiplicity of our own belongings. Against presumptions of ready-made answers, of absolute ‘truths’, and the dangerous silence of consensus, my epistemic options (among a multitude of others) in approaching musical translocality as a means to make sense of our own travels and to make political sense of the world are grounded on disagreement, difference, and rupture. Although this may seem paradoxical in terms of the several illustrations of musico-political coalition brought into fold throughout these chapters, it is precisely from the dissensus of tension and rebellion, not the consensus of normalcy, that translocal solidarity becomes possible.

Multiple cultural expressions of hip hop and heavy metal forms have gone deep into the realm of tension, and summoned from it new ways of being, saying, and belonging: new possibilities of resistance, creativity, and well-being, in face of the barbarity of borders and

bullets, of power and progress. The music of Racionais MC's, Arandu Arakuaa and Rage Against the Machine are marked by a distinct permeability: they are simultaneously outcomes of diaspora and migration, and of the new, translocal and metacultural creative dynamics that have emerged from similar histories of displacement. Their locally-specified attributes (in terms of melodic and linguistic apparatuses, discursive content and practice) consistently oppose the modern/colonial mappings of the nation state: exceptionalist claims in and about 'Brazilianness' and 'Americanness' are cast aside along with the developmentalist, mythological fabrications of progress imbued in such claims. Their musical travels reveal to us, at once, the fragmentary and coalitional dimensions of diaspora and anti-colonial resistance, as old traditions are synergically conjured up alongside new ones. As represented in these musical forms, both hip hop and heavy metal thrive in being unstable and asymmetrical cultural assemblages that travel and cross borders.

Let us thrive in being so ourselves.

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