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The Symphony of State: São Paulo's Department of Culture, 1922-1938

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

THE SYMPHONY OF STATE:

SÃO PAULO'S DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, 1922-1938

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

HISTORY

by

Micah James Oelze

2016

To: Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

This dissertation, written by Micah James Oelze, and entitled *The Symphony of State: São Paulo's Department of Culture, 1922-1938*, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

David Dolata

Marc Hertzman

Okezi Otovo

Bianca Premo, Co-Major Professor

Victor Uribe, Co-Major Professor

Date of Defense: June 24, 2016

The dissertation of Micah James Oelze is approved.

Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
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Andrés G. Gil
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
and Dean of the University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2016

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Mark and Zerrin Oelze, for teaching me to listen.

A Lali y Hugo Rodriguez, por las historias que compartieron conmigo.

In loving memory of Don Cirilo Arteaga.

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I have racked up debts in graduate school, intellectual and otherwise, but owe the most to my mentors. Bianca Premo and Victor Uribe went exceedingly above and beyond the call of duty as co-directors. They are model scholars and treasured mentors. The three other members of my committee have provided me with an ideal balance of warm support and high expectation. Okezi Otovo has always asked the best questions, David Dolata has provided me his careful eye for music and words, and Marc Hertzman has held me accountable to keep local questions in mind even as I consider national implications. I could not have asked for more.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
THE SYMPHONY OF STATE:
SAO PAULO'S DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, 1922-1938

by

Micah James Oelze

Florida International University, 2016

Miami, Florida

Professor Bianca Premo, Co-Major Professor

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In 1920s-30s São Paulo, Brazil, leaders of the vanguard artistic movement known as modernism began to argue that national identity came not from shared values or even cultural practices but rather by a shared way of thinking, which they variously designated as Brazil's racial psychology, folkloric unconscious, and national psychology. Building on turn-of-the-century psychological and anthropological theories, the group diagnosed Brazil's national mind as characterized by primitivity and in need of a program of psychological development. The group rose to political power in the 1930s, placing the artists in a position to undertake such a project. The *Symphony of State* charts this previously unexamined intellectual project and explains why elite leaders believed music to be the most-promising strategy for developing the national mind beyond primitivity. In 1935, they founded the São Paulo Department of Culture and Recreation in order to fund music education, train ethnomusicologists, commission symphonies, and host performances across the city. Until now, historians of twentieth-century Brazil have praised music as a critical site for marginalized groups to sound out political protest. But

The Symphony of State shows the reverse has also been true: elite groups used music as a top-down civilizing project designed to naturalize racial hierarchies and justify class difference.

The intellectual history portion of the dissertation turns on archival sources, newspaper accounts, personal correspondence, modernist literature, and the period's scholarly journals. The examination of literary form, discourse analysis, and marginalia lends depth to a carefully-documented study of ideas. Then, *The Symphony of State* brings to bear an innovative reading of ethnographic field books, vinyl records, and music scores to show that the department's scholarship and symphonic compositions alike furthered the narrative of a nation jeopardized by primitivity. What is more, the department's composers employed musical properties such as harmony and dissonance as metaphors to convince listeners that a harmonious society required the maintenance of racial and class hierarchies. In bringing further clarity to the department's intellectual project, the sections featuring music analysis speak to the value of reading music as an historical text.

The dissertation accomplishes multiple goals. It uncovers the theory of national psychology driving the musical institution; examines ethnographic material to further understand racial and regional prejudice in the period; and analyzes concert music commissioned and performed by the municipal department. The examination of the musical institution reveals a moment in Brazilian history in which national identity was constructed atop the notion of a shared psychology and in which modernity was believed to come with the musical tuning of the body politic and the training of its mind.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
Introduction.....	1
I. Brazilian Modernism: From Politicized Arts to Artists in Politics.....	14
II. The Department of Culture and Recreation: An Institution for Musical and Social Harmony.....	51
III. Towards a Theory of National Psychology: Mario de Andrade and Modernist Ethnography	105
IV. Ethnographic (Mis)Encounters: The Search for a Primitive Mentality in Northeastern Brazil.....	164
V. Performing the Symphony of State: The Congress for Singing the National Language.....	212
Conclusion	258
REFERENCES	268
VITA.....	285

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
2.1. Total Spending, By Division, 1936 (in mil-reis)	59
2.2. Initiatives, Subventions, and Contests, 1936 (in mil-reis)	60
2.3. Total Spending, by Division, 1938 (in mil-reis)	62
2.4. Expense Types, 1936 (in mil-reis)	63
2.5. Expense Types, 1938 (in mil-reis)	63
2.6. Initiatives, Subventions, and Contests, 1938 (in mil-reis)	64
2.7. Language of Books in São Paulo’s Central Library, 1934	81
2.8. Language of Magazines in São Paulo’s Central Library, 1934	81
2.9. Library on Wheels Ford V8 Van	86
2.10. The “Marujada” at the Dom Pedro II Public Playground (1)	101
2.11. The “Marujada” at the Dom Pedro II Public Playground (2)	101
4.1. Genres of Toadas, Gonzaga and Silva Performances	201
4.2. “Zé Pelintra” Toada, Laurentino da Silva	208
4.3. “Mestre Carlos” Toada, Laurentino da Silva	208
5.1. Select Attendees of the Congresso da Lingua Nacional Cantada	215
5.2. “Dance of the Six Slaves” Contra Bassoon Melody, Measure 639 (00:16)	238
5.3. “Dance of the Six Slaves” Central Melody, Measures 643-646 (00:45)	240
5.4. “Dance of the White Princes” Gavotte Figure, Measures 724-728 (00:40)	243
5.5. “Liberation of the Slaves” Liberation Motif, Measure 817-18 (00:41)	245
5.6. “Liberation of the Slaves” Racial Harmony, Measures 860-864 (1:38)	248
5.7. “Liberation of the Slaves” Tritone Motif, Measures 879-880 (2:03)	249

Introduction

The Symphony of State examines a governmental cultural institution founded in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1935. The institution, called the Department of Culture and Recreation, created a municipal orchestra and choir, kept a chamber music group on retainer, trained and funded Brazil's first cohort of professional ethnographers, reformed the local library system, and founded a series of public playgrounds throughout the city providing medical and musical care.

At the head of the municipal department sat a group of artists who had, in the previous decade, led the movement known as *modernismo*, or Brazilian modernism. With national identity as central to the movement, artists began a search for identity that led them to works of psychology and anthropology respected in both artistic and scholarly circles. This search became more urgent as political and social unrest erupted across São Paulo in the 1920s and early 30s in the forms of labor unrest and two experiences of war in the city and its surrounding regions. In the wake of these events, the artists gained positions of political influence. Education reformers and industrial leaders then asked the modernists to design a citywide reform project centered on guaranteeing social harmony. The artists responded by creating a musical institution. They convinced the city's leaders that music was the surest way to reform the city.

The Symphony of State argues that the rationale for the department came from social-scientific ideas from psychology and anthropology blended with long-standing attitudes of paternalism. The institution's leaders believed that Brazilians all shared a "national psychology." The notion of national psychology contained a range of meanings,

sometimes referring to general character traits believed to be shared by all Brazilians (sadness, ingenuity) and other times referring to a specifically Brazilian collective unconscious. The variety of terms in the historical documents (“racial psychology,” “national unconsciousness,” “unconscious of the masses”) attest to this range. Unifying the concept was the belief that this psychology was characterized by primitivity. The scholars of the Department of Culture and Recreation (hereforth DC&R) studied the writings of early anthropologists including James Frazer, Edward Burnett Tylor, and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, who argued that inhabitants of colonial nations had primitive minds. Reflecting on the indigenous and African contributions to Brazil’s demographics and culture, department scholars concluded that this primitive mentality was the defining element of Brazil’s national psychology.

Anthropologists on both sides of the Atlantic had noted the centrality of song and dance to primitive ritual. Many argued that primitive groups had an inherent musical prowess. The modernists in São Paulo took this to mean that Brazilians were uniquely poised for education through music. They tailored their institutional project accordingly. Through the DC&R, they created choirs to help Brazilians learn unity through singing, broadcast concert music across the city to teach workers how to wisely use their free time, and commissioned symphonies that aimed to teach listeners the importance of social harmony. But the belief in a primitive nation came with a looming threat: if not kept in check through paternalist government, Brazilians could revolt or fall back into savage behaviors. With this fear in mind, the municipal department employed music not only as a means of education, but also to encourage listeners to accept situations of inequality as necessary to a harmonious society.

The use of the label “primitive” throughout this dissertation may make readers uncomfortable, and for good reason: social scientists used the term through much of the nineteenth and twentieth century to not only “scientifically” confirm that certain races were inferior to others but also to justify colonial projects across the globe. Scholars today often enclose the term in quotation marks as a way to safeguard against any reader thinking the author actually believes some peoples are primitive. I have chosen not to do so in this dissertation for two reasons. First, I am uncomfortable with placing the word “primitive” in quotation marks without also doing the same with words such as “civilization,” “modernity,” “progress,” and other terms that often elicit few objections among readers but nonetheless carry their own legacies of racism and dangerous presentist assumptions. Second, while I strongly disagree with many of the ideas set forth by past intellectuals, I strive to take those ideas seriously. I fear that placing quotations around certain historical ideas and not others creates a hierarchy indicating that some racist ideas are worse than others or that some historical ideas should be taken more seriously than others. But all forms of racism are harmful. And I think we need to take the prejudices of historical actors very seriously if we hope to better understand the inequalities of our own era. I of course hope it is quite clear that I neither believe in, nor support, any notion of racial essentialism, much less the idea that certain people groups are inherently or psychologically less advanced, evolved, or intelligent than others.

To my knowledge, this dissertation is the first English-language study of São Paulo’s DC&R. There are two books on the institution written in Portuguese, Carlos Sandroni’s *Mário contra Macunaima* and Roberto Barbato Jr.’s *Missionários de uma*

utopia nacional-popular.¹ There are also a near-dozen master's theses and doctoral dissertations on various projects undertaken by the DC&R: its public playgrounds, the Library on Wheels project, and the ethnography course with its subsequent research projects.² Finally, in 2015, Carlos Augusto Calil and Flávio Rodrigo Penteado published *Me esqueci de mim...sou um departamento de cultura*, a commemorative book featuring a collection of pictures, government documents, and historical newspaper articles discussing the Department's projects.³

All of this work provided helpful knowledge as I engaged this dissertation project. Furthermore, since my field research in 2015 corresponded with the 75th anniversary of the first department director Mário de Andrade's death, I had the additional privilege of

¹ Carlos Sandroni, *Mário contra Macunaíma: cultura e política em Mário de Andrade* (São Paulo: Edições Vértice, 1988); Roberto Barbato Jr, *Missionários de uma utopia nacional-popular: Os intelectuais e o Departamento de Cultura de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Annablume Fapesp, 2004).

² Álvaro Carlini, "Cante lá que gravam cá: Mário de Andrade e a Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas de 1938." (master's thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 1994); Vera Lúcia Cardim de Cerqueira, "Contribuições de Samuel Lowrie e Dina Levi-Strauss ao Departamento de Cultura de São Paulo, (1935-1938)," (master's thesis, PUC São Paulo, 2010); Mariza Corrêa, "Traficantes do excêntrico: os antropólogos no Brasil dos anos 30 aos anos 60," *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* 6, 3 (1988): 79-98; Ana Lúcia Goulart de Faria, "O direito à infância. Mário de Andrade e os parques infantis para as crianças de família operária na cidade de São Paulo (1935-1938)" (PhD diss., FEUSP São Paulo, 1994); Ana Lúcia Goulart de Faria, "A Contribuição dos parques infantis de Mário de Andrade para a construção de uma pedagogia da educação infantil," *Educação & Sociedade XX*, 69, 10 (1999): 60-91; Fernando Giobellina Brumana, "Une ethnographie ratée. Le modernisme brésilien, le departement de Culture de São Paulo et la Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas," *Gradhiva*, 7 (2008): 71-83; Antonio Gilberto Ramos Nogueira, *Por um inventário dos sentidos: Mário de Andrade e a concepção de patrimônio e inventário* (São Paulo: Hucitec: FAPESP, 2005); Rita de Cássia Alves Oliveira, "Colonizadores do Futuro: Cultura: Estado e o Departamento de Cultura do Município de São Paulo, 1935-1938" (master's thesis, PUC São Paulo, 1995); Fernanda Arêas, *Dialogos Brasileiros: uma análise da obra de Roger Bastide* (São Paulo: Edusp, 2000); Patrícia Tavares Raffaini, "Esculpindo a Cultura na Forma Brasil: O Departamento de Cultura de São Paulo, 1935-1938," (São Paulo: Humanitas FFLCH/USP, 2001); Carlos Sandroni, "Mário, Oneyda, Dina e Claude," *Revista do Patrimônio Histórico Artístico Nacional*, Brasília: Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico Artístico Nacional, IPHAN, 30, (2002): 232-245; Flávia Camargo Toni, Marcelo Morato Brissac, and Marcia Fernandes dos Santos, "A missão de pesquisas folclóricas do Departamento de Cultura" (São Paulo: Centro Cultural São Paulo, 1984); Luisa Valentini, *Um laboratório de antropologia: o encontro entre Mário de Andrade, Dina Dreyfus e Claude Lévi-Strauss (1935-1938)* (São Paulo: Alameda, 2013).

³ Carlos Augusto Calil and Flávio Rodrigo Penteado, *Me esqueci completamente de mim, sou um departamento de cultura* (São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial Governo do Estado de São Paulo, 2015).

attending three mini-courses and a host of panels regarding the DC&R. This allowed me to hear from and speak with the majority of scholars having published on the topic. The conversations provided me with the awareness of not only what has been studied on the subject but also of the many gaps and questions remaining to be answered. *The Symphony of State* makes significant contributions in three areas.

First, the project attempts to more broadly contextualize São Paulo's local historiography by situating the institution within a series of national and even transatlantic social, political, and intellectual exchanges. This corrects the existing tendency to view the DC&R in a political vacuum. Barbato's monograph served as the exception, but drew conclusions that need to be nuanced. Barbato has suggested that the DC&R was the rope in a local tug-of-war between an apolitical modernist group pulling to bring national art to the people of Sao Paulo and a political elite working to use the institution to regain political hegemony.⁴ Barbato has overlooked both the political influence wielded by the modernists and the social reform goals of the political party's industrial and political leaders. The leaders of the DC&R were ranking members in São Paulo's Constitutionalist Party. They worked tightly with industrialist and educational reformers as they designed the institution.

This dissertation also contributes to the literature by explaining the intellectual project that undergirded the department. Components of this intellectual framework, such as the practice of paternalism, have been noted by scholars but have been either misconstrued or dismissed as inconsequential. Sandroni, for example, noticed the paternalist attitude of the DC&R in regards to their planning of cultural events for the São

⁴ Barbato, *Missionários*, especially 72, 80, 191.

Paulo public. He turned to Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* for an explanation. Foucault examined nineteenth-century penal reform in order to argue that the century witnessed a shift in sanctioning that transformed from a punishment of the body to a reform of the soul. Surveillance, discipline, and discourse worked together to construct notions of normative individuals and delinquents. People adjusted their behavior to fit within norms and avoid deviance.⁵ Sandroni applied this model to São Paulo, reading the DC&R as an institution designed to normalize Brazilian cultural consumption, and condemn Europhilia as deviant.⁶ But the DC&R was both less and more than this. While the DC&R indeed engaged projects attempting to guide childrens' playground songs and adults' listening preferences, the institution's goal was not in the least to characterize European cultural consumption as deviant. A discussion of Foucault's work would instead be more relevant in a comparison of each project's broader goals. Shifts among Western penal systems hoped to reform the individual's soul; the DC&R project aimed to develop the nation's psyche. The musical institution concerned itself with strengthening unity within the city of São Paulo whereas Foucault's prison reformers had little interest in unifying Paris, or any other city. Finally, while the penal reform employed surveillance, discipline, and correctional spaces, the DC&R project relied chiefly on sound. Yet both projects featured a state dedicated to engaging technology, social-sciences theories, and urban space in the pursuit of modernity.

The Symphony of State also connects the history of the DC&R to broader questions regarding political culture, racial ideologies, and social-science projects in early

⁵ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

⁶ Sandroni, *Mário*, especially Ch 2.

twentieth-century Brazil. The department leaders serve as guides to broader political projects in the period, revealing especially the connection between music, governance, and the social sciences. While the relationship between government projects and social-science concepts has been well-explored during the period of Brazil's explicit project of *branqueamento*—in which the government sponsored immigration in hopes of lightening the skin color of the nation—scholars have yet to see the influence that anthropology and psychology on government institutions and interventions in the interwar period.⁷ As the case of the DC&R demonstrates, the dialogue between state and science had national consequences. This is made most clear in the Chapter 5 discussion of the national conference that lay the groundwork for Brazil's national program of childhood music education, called *Canto Orfeônico* (Orpheonic Song).

Brazilian historiography has a rich body of scholarship connecting music and politics. Scholars have done an excellent job of reading the political meanings in lyrics, and in charting the ways in which artists have used music for political organization and protest.⁸ But historians have tended to limit their analysis to lyrics of commercial (“popular”) music, or the ways in which music organizes communities for political action.

⁷ Regarding the relationship between government policy and ideas of eugenics and evolution, see Thomas Skidmore, *Black Into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); Mark Adams, *The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil, and Russia*, Monographs on the History and Philosophy of Biology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); João Cruz Costa, *A History of Ideas in Brazil*, trans. by Suzette Macedo (Berkeley: Univ of California Press, 1964); Richard Graham, *The Idea of Race in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Jeanette Eileen Jones and Patrick Sharp, *Darwin in Atlantic Cultures: Evolutionary Visions of Race, Gender, and Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Lilia Moritz Schwarz, *The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870–1930* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999); Nancy Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

⁸ Bryan McCann, *Hello, Hello Brazil: Popular Music in the Making of Modern Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) for an excellent use of commercial music lyrics for historical analysis. Top scholars studying Brazilian music as a means to social and political organization can be found in Idelbar Avelar and Christopher Dunn, eds, *Brazilian Popular Music and Citizenship* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).

Musicologists, for their part, have a tendency to isolate analysis of concert music from the political and social ideas motivating composers. *The Symphony of State* breaks methodological ground for historians and musicologists alike by suggesting both disciplines have something to gain, not just by sampling from each other's methodologies, but even more so by integrating the disciplines. Based on an analysis that compares recordings, orchestral scores, librettos, concert programs, and music reviews with government documents, personal correspondence, and socio-historic context, *The Symphony of State* argues that government projects in 1930s Brazil justified sociopolitical arrangements through sonic metaphors. Composers used musical harmony in symphonies and ballets to speak to the nature of social and racial harmony in Brazilian society. Ultimately, the composers affirmed that racial and class hierarchies were necessary to prevent the discord they believed would arise from an undisciplined primitivity. They articulated these messages through musical tropes and arranging styles. The DC&R then used these compositions didactically in performances for local and national elites.

Scholars of race in Brazil spent much of the twentieth-century discussing the notion of the nation's purported "racial democracy."⁹ Before the Second World War, Brazilian scholars argued that a history of miscegenation and a distinct legal framework allowed Brazilians of different skin colors to interact harmoniously.¹⁰ The post-war period brought a UNESCO study of race relations in Brazil led by scholars including

⁹ A recent discussion of the transatlantic nature of this historiographic conversation can be found in Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, *Race in Translation: Culture Wars Around the Postcolonial Atlantic* (New York: New York University Press: 2012).

¹⁰ The "racial democracy" literature is examined in George Reid Andrews, *Blacks & Whites in São Paulo, Brazil 1888-1988* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991). Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães also has written extensively on the topic. See Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães, "Democracia racial: el ideal, el pacto, y el mito," *Estudios Sociológicos*, 20, 59 (2002): 305-333.

Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes.¹¹ The studies uncovered the systematic economic marginalization of people of color in Brazil, and provided the first wave of studies examining the complex systems of racial prejudice across the nation. Recently, scholar Paulina Alberto demonstrated that blacks in 1930s São Paulo recognized that Brazilian “racial harmony” was a myth, and yet still invoked the discourse in order to demand increased inclusion in Brazilian society.¹² Barbara Weinstein, in turn, has made it clear that harmony was more than a racial ideal, it was also a social one. Industrialists in São Paulo undertook a series of reform projects throughout the first half of the twentieth-century in hopes of maintaining social peace in the city.¹³ *The Symphony of State* adds to this literature by showing that historical actors recognized that the term “harmony” was a musical one. But in response to the protests made by the historical actors discussed by Alberto and Weinstein, São Paulo’s elites pointed to the orchestra as evidence that it was hierarchy, and not equality, that guaranteed a harmonious society.

Today, historians are well-aware of the racial ideologies and discrimination present in early twentieth-century Brazil. They also recognize that the Vargas-era championing of a Brazilian national identity based on racial and cultural mixing had several qualifiers; the Afro-Brazilian samba could be celebrated as a national genre, for example, but white elites would be the ones singing the songs on commercial radio.¹⁴

This dissertation further explains that ambivalence by exploring what I believe to be the

¹¹ Florestan Fernandes, *The Negro in Brazilian Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

¹² Paulina Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion: Black Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

¹³ Barbara Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil: Industrialists and the Remaking of the Working Class in São Paulo: 1920-1964* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

¹⁴ McCann, *Hello, Hello*, 2004; Darién Davis, *White Face, Black Mask: Africaneity and the Early Social History of Popular Music in Brazil* (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2008).

frameworks of the modernist vision of Brazil's race and class makeup—primitivism, psychology, and paternalism. I have attempted to be more analytical than judgmental, explaining these frameworks and their consequences rather than condemning the actors for operating within them. It is tempting to say that modernism's interest in Afro-Brazilians, Amerindians—alongside its paternal concern for the masses—was an instrumental step in a long process working towards further democratic inclusion and racial equality. But I fear it is more realistic to say that the discourse they created surrounding Brazilian primitivity has become a hurdle that, even today, trips up attempts by Brazilian musicians and visual artists in pursuit of greater racial and class equality.

The Symphony of State builds on a wide variety of sources. Archival records, newspapers, personal correspondence, and department publications account for the traditional historical sources informing the project. Visual and literary sources including poems, essays, manifestos, novels, and paintings speak to the intellectual framework undergirding the cultural institution. An examination of the DC&R's ethnographic research engages the documentation produced during the department's 1938 six-month recording trip: ethnographic field books, sound recordings, even short black-and-white silent films. Finally, original orchestral scores, librettos, concert programs, and newspaper reviews allowed for the analysis of the department's musical production.

My intention throughout much of the research process was to find the ideas behind each source. While reading through the majority of director Mário de Andrade's published writing, and working through his research bibliographies and personal correspondence, I listed the authors he found most influential. Then reading carefully through that list of a more than a dozen turn-of-the-century anthropologists and

psychologists, I noted the various cases in which Andrade had paraphrased or directly lifted from them. Nor was Andrade the only writer in São Paulo to borrow from these scholars. Anthropology, psychology, and studies of primitivism served as core reading for many of Andrade's colleagues, students, and hired composers.

This primitivist framework justified extensive state spending on music education, performance groups, and local concerts. The project contributed to the establishment of music as central to Brazilian cultural production, and thus as a prime avenue for political dialogue. But the same framework brought paternalist attitudes into cultural politics and then enacted a discourse justifying the exclusion of lower-class and marginalized communities from areas beyond the cultural sphere: politics, business, education. In other words, the discourse of a Brazilian primitive mentality gave marginalized communities a birthright as contributors to national identity, even as it weakened their claim to economic, legal, and political inclusion in society.

The dissertation is organized thematically, although I have tried to be as attentive to chronology as possible. Chapter 1 opens with a discussion of Brazil's modernist art movement as it was launched and fostered in São Paulo. The discussion is representative rather than exhaustive: local artists published volumes of material while, across the country, writers, composers, and painters joined in and contributed to the movement. The chapter suggests that the period's experiences with military revolt, war, labor organization, and political reform fundamentally shaped the modernist cohort's view of their society. These events also explain how the modernists came into positions of political influence, resulting in the 1935 establishment of the cultural department.

Chapter 2 provides an institutional history of the DC&R based on archival and newspaper sources. It first examines financial records and statistics to show that music played a central role in the department's social interventions. It explores the musical initiatives across the city and the benefits leaders hoped would come as a result. Finally, the chapter examines the DC&R's social programs at libraries and public playgrounds, showing that they also reproduced the commitments to paternalism and psychological development present in the larger institution.

The dissertation then delves into intellectual history proper to explain how the DC&R leaders arrived at a theory of national psychology. Chapter 3 exams the writings of Mário de Andrade, the modernist leader serving as director of the cultural department. The diachronic analysis of his broader intellectual output—poetry, fiction, ethnography, journalism, music criticism, and music history—reveals how Andrade constructed a theory of national identity atop ideas from anthropology of the primitive mind and Freudian psychoanalysis. The chapter then shows how other department leaders and ethnographers adopted this framework and language.

Chapter 4 examines the department's largest ethnographic undertaking: a six-month tour through states in Brazil's North and Northeast regions with the goal of documenting festivities, folkloric music, and Afro-Brazilian religious practices. In addition to field books, the department ethnographers brought with them more than a hundred blank acetate discs and a portable recording studio. Evidence in the field books and audio recordings suggest the ethnographers' insistence on the primitive mentality of their informants overdetermined the way they engaged their research and the conclusions they drew. This does not mean the recordings have no worth. In spite of the biases that

conditioned the creation of the ethnographic documents, careful scholarship can still result in fruitful analyses of cultural practices in the period. To this end, I venture an alternative model from which to interpret the recordings and close the chapter with an application of this model to three of the musical encounters.

The final chapter examines a national conference hosted by the DC&R in 1937. The “Congress on Singing the National Language” reveals the department worked to reform musical education across the nation so that it would more closely align with their psychological project. Department leaders used the research portion of the conference to teach educators and scholars about Brazil’s primitive mentality and the need for a national project of unity through singing. I argue the conference laid the critical groundwork for the Canto Orfeônico project that would be implemented across the nation over the next decade. Finally, the chapter turns to an analysis of the music performed at the conference’s closing concert. The examination of a symphonic poem and ballet, both written by DC&R composers, confirm that the composers intentionally engaged the primitive mentality paradigm. Together with local musicians, intellectuals, government workers, and scholars, the composers contributed to what I call São Paulo’s “Symphony of State”: the series of musical movements arranged by the DC&R in an attempt to redeem a primitive mentality through a paternalistic project of psychological reform.

CHAPTER I

Brazilian Modernism: From Politicized Arts to Artists in Politics

Introduction

São Paulo's modernist movement began as a vanguard artistic project and then became one of Brazil's early experiences of artists occupying important political posts. The movement, in conjunction with social and political events of the 1920s, shaped São Paulo's approach to governance in the next decade. By the 1930s, the city would engage its residents in a large project of cultural development characterized by paternalism, psychology, and primitivism. Music, viewed as a nexus of these three projects, served as a critical component to the political project.

Paternalism described the style of engagement characteristic of a progressive government that recognized the importance of extending education and suffrage to a broader public, and yet remained strictly dedicated to social hierarchy. In the 1920s and 30s, São Paulo's economic and political leaders came to see the breach of class, race, and rank hierarchies as a grave threat to public peace and elite economic interests. This was a direct result of strikes, high rates of immigration, and military revolt.

Artists and government leaders alike recognized psychology and psychoanalysis—burgeoning fields still unburdened by criticisms from other branches in the social sciences—as critical tools in the search for national identity and the maintenance of a healthy body politic. For artists, the fields offered creative methods with which to explore not only their own personal unconscious, but also a collective

psychology they believed pertained to their nation.¹ Government leaders had already grown accustomed to supporting the use of applied psychology to guide reform projects of prisons and mental institutions.

Primitivism can be a challenge to define because of the various manifestations it has taken over the last century, and the ways in which the concept has developed into a discourse furthering an imperial project of maintaining difference between Western nation-states and developing nations.² In the early twentieth century, the term generally referred to a series of interrelated movements in the arts, anthropology, and psychology. The movements purported to explore (and then represent) the culture, mind, and aesthetics of non-Western peoples.³ For some artists, primitivism was the representation of a people temporally removed from the West. So in the most famous example of musical primitivism—Igor Stravinsky’s 1913 *Rite of Spring*—Indo-Europeans from antiquity serve as the primitive protagonists. Some artists distinguished between primitivism and *exoticism*, applying the latter term to works of art depicting places geographically far from the West (such as Tahiti in the paintings of Paul Gauguin). Anthropologists began to collapse the distinction between exoticism and primitivism,

¹ In spite of the variety of psychological terms available to Brazilian artists in the 1930s, this dissertation uses the Freudian term “unconscious” [German “unbewusst”] rather than the French-derived term “subconscious.” This is because the modernist artists held Freud as their central reference point for psychology.

² Marianna Torgovnick’s introduction was quite helpful in my attempt at a definition of primitivism. See *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

³ There is a sizeable literature on this subject. In addition to Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive*, see James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); Sieglende Lemke, *Primitivist Modernism: Black Culture and the Origins of Transatlantic Modernism*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Susan Hiller, ed. *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art* (London: Routledge, 1991); Anthea Kraut, “Between Primitivism and Diaspora: The Dance Performances of Josephine Baker, Zora Neale Hurston, and Katherine Dunham.” *Theatre Journal* 55, 3 (Oct 2003): 433-450.

arguing that colonial peoples were characterized by a primitive mentality comparable to those of the superstitious Europeans of antiquity. In other words, anthropologists conflated the primitive with the exotic. Modernist artists in Brazil, too, discarded the label of exoticism first because they borrowed from anthropological definitions and second because Amerindian and African Diaspora subjects considered exotic by Europeans formed part of the Brazilian population.

In São Paulo, primitivism began with the modernists' artistic commitment to using Amerindian and African motifs to highlight values, aesthetics, and traits they believed to be distinct to Brazil. Throughout the 1920s, Brazil's ethnographic community applied the "primitive mentality" thesis of European anthropologists to their own research. The scholars concluded their nation was indeed characterized by primitive cultural practices, and beliefs. Elite writers considered themselves above this mentality, naming Afro-Brazilians, Amerindians, and the working poor to be the strongest carriers of primitive thinking. As modernist writers gained positions of political power in 1920s São Paulo, they turned the primitive mentality thesis into a philosophical justification for using the arts in society. They defended, first, that the underdeveloped mind of the masses was uniquely poised to benefit from socialization via music. Second, they suggested that certain traits associated with primitive groups—such as tribal unity—could help heal the city and provide Brazil with a distinct route to modernity.

This chapter opens with an examination of the modernist movement, focusing on how the artists explored this political trinity—paternalism, psychology, and primitivism—in their early work. These explorations turned into political commitments as a result of critical political and social events occurring in the following ten years. The

chapter argues that São Paulo's experiences with destructive warfare, political unrest, and labor organization cemented the artists' commitment to this political trinity. The events also allowed the group to assume positions of political influence. Joining with educators and industrial reformers, the modernist artists created the Department of Culture and Recreation in 1935. The institution engaged the city in a musical education project that aimed to limit labor unrest, help immigrants assimilate, further scientific scholarship, and, eventually, provide the rest of the nation with a new model of education and socialization.

This chapter synthesizes historical scholarship on São Paulo while also providing an original analysis of artistic and political works from the period. While scholars of modernism have pointed to the movement's wide array of artistic themes, there are a handful of traits including primitivism that gain special significance when placed in conversation with the period's political changes and social struggles. To establish this dialogue, I have brought together historical monographs on Brazilian art, education, labor, and military. While these histories are often studied apart from each other, it was their intersection that paved the way for São Paulo's musical department.

Setting a Stage for the Arts

Coffee production took off in the nineteenth century in the state of São Paulo, which, by the arrival of the twentieth century, was the largest single coffee producer in the world.⁴ The earliest coffee workers were slaves sold or relocated south from regions

⁴ General introductions to nineteenth- and twentieth-century São Paulo include Warren Dean, *The Industrialization of São Paulo, 1880-1945* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969); Mauricio Font, *Coffee and Transformation in São Paulo, Brazil* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010); Anne G. Hanley, *Native Capital: Financial Institutions and Economic Development in São Paulo, Brazil, 1850-1920*

further north.⁵ But through the nineteenth century plantation owners began to turn to European immigrant labor. At the close of the century, government leaders, engineers, and lawyers, believing in the need for racial whitening of the nation, began to subsidize transatlantic passages for European immigrant workers.⁶ Italians and Spaniards predominated, but large groups of various European and Asian nationalities joined the steady stream of immigrants. With São Paulo state as the heaviest employer of new arrivals, the city soon gained a kaleidoscopic demographic.⁷

Money from coffee exports gave the state of São Paulo a disproportionate amount of economic power over the rest of the nation. Much of the profit was invested into industry, creating a minor industrial revolution within the city unmatched by any other urban center in Brazil. Industries in the regions surrounding the city of São Paulo included textiles, chemical plants, stonecutting, and metalworking.⁸ The city also exercised military and political power over much of the rest of the country. The Police

(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); Joseph Love, *São Paulo in the Brazilian Federation, 1889-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980); Richard Morse, *From Community to Metropolis: A Biography of São Paulo* (New York: Octagon Books, 1974 [1958]); Barbara Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity: São Paulo and the Making of Race and Nation in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015); James Woodard, *A Place in Politics: São Paulo, Brazil from Seigneurial Republicanism to Regionalist Revolt* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

⁵ On coffee cultivation in the Paraíba River Valley, see Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No: Women's Stories from a Brazilian Slave Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁶ The standard monograph is Thomas Holloway, *Immigrants on the Land: Coffee and Society in São Paulo, 1889-1934* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980). Thomas Skidmore published the foundational text on racial ideology dealing with this period of Brazilian history. See Thomas Skidmore, *Black Into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). See also the additional discussion on the subject in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

⁷ For immigration in São Paulo in the period, see Holloway, *Immigrants*; Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Jeffrey Lesser, *Welcoming the Undesirables: Brazil and the Jewish Question* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

⁸ John French, *The Brazilian Workers' ABC: Class Conflict and Alliances in Modern São Paulo* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

Force (*Força Pública*) earned a reputation throughout the nation, even called upon by the federal capital to help quell rebellions.⁹

Economic power went hand-in-hand with political power, and São Paulo's small oligarchy—maintained through kinship and corporate ties—enjoyed significant political power on a national level during the “First Republic,” the period running from the end of Brazil's monarchy in 1889 to a military coup in 1930. At home in the city of São Paulo, the elite oligarchy ran a single-party system through the Paulista Republican Party (PRP). The oligarchy could also push their weight at federal elections with support from the leaders of the neighboring state Minas Gerais, known for its dairy production. The extensive cooperation between the two state earned the period the nickname *Café com Leite* (Coffee and Milk) politics.

The wealth from coffee and industry in São Paulo generated an interest in culture and the arts. Even before the turn of the century, immigrant families that had done well for themselves purchased land along the Avenida Paulista, which ran the ridge at the top of a hill overlooking the city. These families paid architects to make mansions (*palacetes*) reminiscent of the architecture of their home countries. One such architect, Ramos de Azevedo, became well known for his work, and moved on to help create the São Paulo's Polytechnical Institute in 1895, forming the next generation of engineers, architects, and urban planners. Azevedo also oversaw the construction of the Theatro Municipal, opened

⁹ Love, *São Paulo*, 217-9.

in 1911, which came to serve as one of the most important cultural institutions in early twentieth-century São Paulo.¹⁰

Azevedo and other engineers were joined by coffee magnates and other wealthy elites in funding the arts. Some believed sponsoring the arts would improve their reputation. Paulista Railroad Company executive Adolfo Augusto Pinto, needing to convince public executives and congressmen to pass legislation friendly to trains, decided to present his company as patron of the arts.¹¹ Others, such as Paulo da Silva Prado, the sole inheritor of an enormous coffee and industrial estate, himself traveled frequently to Europe and believed sponsoring the arts would improve the city while ensuring the maintenance of his own reputation in the community.

Brazilian Modernism

Brazil's modernist movement was born of relationships between artists and these patrons, and also of the relationships artists shared with each other.¹² In 1917, Brazilian artist Anita Malfatti exhibited her artwork between trips on exchange to Germany and the

¹⁰ Sérgio Miceli, *Nacional Estrangeiro: História social e cultural do modernismo artístico em São Paulo* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003), 33-35.

¹¹ Miceli, *Nacional*.

¹² The literature on Brazilian modernism is vast. See Aracy Amaral, *Tarsila, sua obra e seu tempo* (São Paulo: Perspectiva/USP, 1975); Gerard Behague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994); Raul Bopp, *Vida e morte da antropofagia* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1977); Mário da Silva Brito, *Antecedentes da Semana de Arte Moderna* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira 1964); Marcia Camargos, *Semana de 22: Entre vaías e aplausos* (São Paulo: Boitempo Editorial, 2002); Fundación Juan March, ed, *Tarsila do Amaral* (Madrid: Fundación Juan March, 2009); Maria Célia Machado, "Villa-Lobos e a Semana de Arte Moderna," *Revista brasileira de música*, 17, (1987): 92-97; Gilberto Mendonça Teles, *Vanguarda européia e modernismo brasileiro* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1977); Sérgio Miceli, *Intelectuais à brasileira* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras 2001); Sérgio Miceli, *Nacional Estrangeiro: História social e cultural do modernismo artístico em São Paulo* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003); Jorge Schwartz, *Vanguardas latino-americanas: polêmicas, manifestos e textos críticos* (São Paulo: Edusp/Iluminuras/Fapesp, 1995); José Miguel Wisnik, *O coro dos contrários. A música em torno da semana de 22* (São Paulo: Livraria Duas Cidades, 1977).

United States. During her exhibit she met poets Oswald de Andrade and Mário de Andrade, themselves of no relation but acquainted as a result of their involvement with journalism. Oswald de Andrade had been born into a wealthy family and relied on financial support from the family's estate to study, travel, and then begin his career as a journalist. A poet and polemicist, Oswald de Andrade had already started his own art-criticism weekly called "O pirralho" (The pipsqueak). Mário de Andrade, also an aspiring poet and journalist, graduated from São Paulo's music conservatory and joined its staff, teaching piano and lecturing on aesthetics and music history. The three artists were soon joined by poet Menotti del Pichia and painter Tarsila do Amaral, resulting in the core "Group of Five" modernists.¹³

In 1922, over three nights of music and poetry readings at the Theatro Municipal, the group formally inaugurated Brazil's modernist movement. But this *Semana de Arte Moderna*, or Week of Modern Art, had important precursors manifesting modernism's aesthetic and social commitments. Novels such as Graça Aranha's 1902 *Canaã* and Euclides da Cunha's 1903 *Os Sertões* had portrayed immigrants, working-classes, and rural impoverished communities in a favorable light. Lithuanian-born Jewish immigrant Lasar Segall had exhibited vanguard visual artwork in São Paulo in 1913, as did Anita Malfatti in her 1917 exhibit. The *Semana*, then, was significant in its consolidation of work already years in development. Equally as important, it helped establish relationships permitting cooperation among a wider group of Brazilian artists.¹⁴

¹³ Eduardo Jardim, *Eu sou trezentos: Mário de Andrade vida e obra* (Rio de Janeiro: Edições de Janeiro, 2015).

¹⁴ Mário da Silva Brito, *Antecedentes*.

Modernist art explicitly engaged an array of previous and contemporaneous movements. Cubism, Dadaism, Futurism, and Impressionism strongly marked the modernists, especially considering that all except Mário de Andrade had spent time abroad, many in Paris. Back in São Paulo, the vanguard generation worked to distance itself from previous Brazilian poets. Many had grown up reading work by Olavo Bilac and Raimundo Correia, poets who embraced the French Parnassian literary movement. *Parnassianismo*, with a focus on classical subjects, became an easy target for young artists interested in portraying local images. The modernists also rejected the older generation's painstaking attention to poetic meter as an excuse to ignore quality content. Denouncing the previous generation allowed the modernists to feel they were achieving an artistic revolution within Brazil.¹⁵

The movement resists facile characterization first because of its multiple pursuits and, second, because it split in directions through the 1920s. Four social and intellectual commitments, however, stand out. Artists shared these commitments, not only in their early aesthetic work, but also in their political work of the late 1930s, working either under Mário de Andrade in the São Paulo Department of Culture and Recreation or under Minister of Culture Gustavo Capanema in Rio de Janeiro. These four inter-related commitments included a celebration of the primitive, interest in Freudian psychology, attention to social issues (immigration and labor), and the search for a national language.¹⁶

¹⁵ Mário de Andrade, *Escrava que não foi Isaura*, reprinted in *Obra imatura* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins, 1972); Charles Perrone, *Seven Faces: Brazilian Poetry Since Modernism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

¹⁶ This choice of four characteristics is my own. Each, however, has long been recognized as important. Cassiano Nunes, "The Characteristics of Modern Poetry in Brazil," *Comparative Literature Studies*, 5,1,

Brazilian modernists combined Europe's engagement with primitivism with their own local notion of race in order to offset colonial criticism of Brazil's racial makeup. As Picasso's 1907 *Las Demoiselles d'Avignon* suggested that African elements in art could present the artistic world with valuable and innovative contributions, Brazilian modernists began to imagine that their racial makeup—mythically a blend of Amerindian, African, and European blood and culture—could be artistically reproduced, making work nationally representative and internationally reputable.

Florencia Garramuño, exploring the relationship between primitivism, popular music, and national identity, has highlighted the colonial discourse present in the Latin American decision to embrace primitivism in portrayals of their nation: these artists transformed “the exoticization of the nation to the nationalization of the exotic.”¹⁷ The point is as valid for Brazilian modernism as it is for the popular Brazilian music, and the modernist cohort employed sarcasm, irony, and inversion in manifestos claiming that Brazil's primitivity provided the nation with an artistic fecundity.

In 1924, Oswald de Andrade published the *Manifesto Pau-Brasil*, or Brazilwood Manifesto.¹⁸ Brazilwood, the reddish resonant wood used for luxury furniture and musical instruments, had served as Brazil's first export crop, years before permanent colonial settlements were founded by the Portuguese. In the manifesto, Oswald de Andrade argued Brazil had a “dual and [still-]present foundation—the forest and the

(Mar 1968): 21-39. For the work of modernists under Capanema in Rio de Janeiro, see Daryle Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil: the First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

¹⁷ Florencia Garramuño, *Modernidades primitivas: Tango, samba y nación* (Argentina, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007), 47.

¹⁸ The Manifesto is available in Fundación Juan March, ed., *Tarsila do Amaral* (Madrid: Fundación Juan March, 2009). The subsequent book of poetry related to the manifesto was published as Oswald de Andrade and Haroldo de Campos, *Pau-Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 1990).

school.”¹⁹ This dual reality balanced primitive magic, on the one hand, with civilized science on the other, “A mix of ‘sleep baby or the boogey-man will get you’ and equations.”²⁰ Rather than rejecting or lamenting the presence of this dual base of Brazilian society, Oswald de Andrade celebrated it, using such exclamations as “Bárbaro e nosso.” The phrase, meaning “Barbarism and ours,” sounds similar—and looks almost identical—to “Bárbaro é nosso” (Barbarism is ours). Oswald de Andrade suggested poets recognize the value of creating art that mixed barbarism with civilization and then export their “pau brasil poetry” (and the broader arts) just as Brazilwood itself had been exported. In this way, the poet envisioned Brazil turning away from a historic system of exportation of raw material. Brazilian artists instead could export manufactures—poems, paintings, and songs.

Painter Tarsila do Amaral further celebrated Brazil as born in primitivity. Her paintings “A Negra” (Black Woman) and “Abaporu” (Man-Eater) praised vitality and connection to the earth. In both paintings, the figures have oversized feet and small heads. The disproportionate feet emphasize the connection between body and earth, physical strength, and vitality. For the Amerindian in “Abaporu,” life comes from a sun resembling an orange slice, warming the Amerindian who grows as tall as the surrounding tropical foliage. This life-giving power was presented in “A Negra” in the form of the large right breast, which the woman holds up to nourish the viewer, potentially any and every Brazilian.

¹⁹ “Temos a base dupla e presente—a floresta e a escola.” The translation is mine, since the English translation in Fundación Juan March, *Tarsila* mistranslates the phrase as a “dual and actual foundation.” Subsequent translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

²⁰ “Um misto de ‘dorme nenê que o bicho vem pegá’ e de equações.” Oswald de Andrade, *Manifesto Pau Brasil* in Fundación Juan March, *Tarsila*.

The black woman willingly giving her breast to Brazil cannot be divorced from Brazilian histories and social imaginaries regarding blacks as wet nurses. Black females, slaves and domestic workers alike, had long experienced physical exploitation, not least of which included nursing white children. Although the modernist artists invoked this act as a symbol of blacks strengthening the Brazilian race through maternal care, historian Paulina Alberto has shown that the image did not earn blacks better social treatment or economic standing in society.²¹ Amaral's painting then, represents a larger trait of the modernist praisings of primitivism. They tore down structures of international colonial judgments on one hand while reinforcing national and regional racial hierarchies with the other.

Oswald de Andrade published the "Manifesto Antropófago," or Cannibalist Manifesto, in 1928, inspired by Amaral's "Abaporu." Apocryphally, the idea for a cannibalist metaphor occurred over a decadent dinner of frog legs and absynthe filled with gold leaf. Oswald de Andrade and Tarsila do Amaral jokingly compared the consumption of frog legs with the act of human cannibalism purportedly practiced by Tupi Amerindians in early-colonial Brazil. But themselves engaging what they considered European-bourgeois decadent consumption, they imagined a scenario of Amerindian consumption of European ideas. Just as ritual cannibalism aimed at increasing the power of the eater, so too the modernists ventured they could increase their artistic power by ingesting foreign concepts and making them their own.²²

²¹ Paulina Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion: Black Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 90-101, 209-211, 293-4.

²² Raul Bopp. *Seleto em prosa e verso de Raul Bopp* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1975), 83.

The manifesto opened with the question (in English): “Tupi or not Tupi?”²³ The line itself cannibalized Shakespeare’s famous existential question, reframing it as a question over Brazilian identity, with the Amerindian tribe (here a metonym for primitivity) at the center of what it meant to be Brazilian. The poet pushed cannibalism as critical to the vitality of the Brazilian arts. Then, playing off the title of Freud’s *Totem and Taboo*, the young poet announced: “Anthropophagy. The permanent transformation of taboo into totem.” Oswald de Andrade suggested that the act of (intellectual and artistic) cannibalism, once taboo, should itself become an enshrined or “totemic” symbol of Brazil’s art scene. The modernist writer signed his manifesto, “Oswald de Andrade, in Piratininga, Year 374 of the Deglutition of Bishop Sardinha.” Since Bishop Pedro Fernandes Sardinha was thought to have been among the first Portuguese visitors devoured by Tupi Indians, the poet’s valediction—by counting years in terms of the first devouring act—suggested that the Brazilian nation began with this primordial act of Cannibalism. This, too, parodied the conclusion of Freud’s *Totem and Taboo*, in which civilization was imagined to have been founded upon the ritual death of a primordial tribe’s alpha-male.²⁴

For Mário de Andrade, the work of Sigmund Freud became central not only for artistic production, but requisite for understanding Brazil. Andrade’s engagement with Freudian psychoanalysis is explored in detail in Chapter 3. For the rest of the modernists, Freud’s writing served as evidence and justification that primitivism and language were

²³ Originally published in the *Revista de antropofagia*, May 1, 1928. Reprinted in Fundación Juan March, ed, *Tarsila do Amaral* (Madrid: Fundación Juan March, 2009): 25-29.

²⁴ Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*. Translation by James Strachey (New York: Routledge, 2001 [1913]).

critical components to any search for, and portrayal of, personal and national identity. In earlier works such as *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, Freud suggested that verbal slips and other mistakes in speech were critical clues for revealing the deeper character of the speaker.²⁵ The modernists used this notion to champion a commitment to everyday Brazilian speech. In the words of Oswald de Andrade, “The millionfold contribution of all errors. / How we speak. How we are.”²⁶

The modernists wanted to reclaim Brazilian quotidian speech and grammar. Everyday speech swung the artistic pendulum far away from the Lusophile “purism” of the Parnassians, and claimed Brazilian expression as valid. The intervention is clearly seen in Oswald de Andrade’s “On Pronouns”:

Grant me a cigarette
Says the grammar book
Of the professor, the student,
and the educated mulatto
But good blacks and whites
Of the Brazilian nation
On a daily basis say
Enough of that man,
Gimme a smoke.²⁷

In the poem, Brazilians with their social standing at stake (the student, the mulatto) are anxious to pass themselves as educated and proper. They choose to speak ornately rather than communicate according to the norms of informal Brazilian Portuguese. Andrade’s

²⁵ Sigmund Freud. *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud: Psychopathology of Everyday Life; The Interpretation of Dreams; Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex; Wit and its Relations to the Unconscious; Totem and Taboo; History of the Psychoanalytic Movement*. Translated and edited by Dr. A. Brill (New York: The Modern Library, 1995).

²⁶ Oswald de Andrade, *Manifesto Pau Brasil*, in Fundación Juan March, ed, *Tarsila*, 20.

²⁷ “Pronominais”: Dê-me um cigarro / Diz a gramática / Do professor e do aluno / E do mulato sabido / Mas o bom negro e o bom branco / Da Nação Brasileira / Dizem todos os dias / Deixa disso camarada / Me dá um cigarro.

poem reclaimed the value of everyday speech. The vernacular was appropriate for all people. He even went so far as to suggest that quotidian speech could form part of civic duty or patriotism—such was the speech of the “good” Brazilians.

Bandeira echoed the sentiment in his “Poetics,” saying “Down with the purists / All words especially the universal barbarisms / All constructions especially syntaxes of exception.” Whereas Oswald de Andrade had already commented that “Bárbaro e nosso,” Bandeira played with the term “barbarismos” and its dual meaning. One meaning approximates that which the term suggests in English: barbarism as savagery and lacking civilization. The other refers to any phrase in language that breaks rules of spelling, pronunciation, or syntax. Bandeira’s comment advanced the celebration of the primitive even as it contributed to an imagined Freudian project of Brazilian psychological development.

Increasingly throughout the 1920s, the modernist group gave attention to Brazilian workers and immigrants. At times the artists portrayed these groups in a favorable or heroic light, such as in Candido Portinari’s portrayal of black coffee workers in “Mestiço” (Mestizo) and “Lavrador de Cafe” (Coffee Worker). Immigrants and workers were frequently depicted as martyrs or marginalized in a way evoking pity and compassion. Portinari, in the 1940s, would convey the pain of rural migrants in his works “Criança Morta” (Dead Child) and “Retirantes” (Migrants). Lasar Segall had achieved this earlier, showing the ways in which grief and alienation wrote themselves onto the bodies and faces of those having crossed the Atlantic.

In “Emigrantes III,” Segall hollowed out the eyes of the immigrant family, a gesture symbolizing the loss of identity. A woman stands in the middle of the portrait, a

geographic representation of her responsibility to hold the family together. Her pose and headscarf are reminiscent of the suffering Catholic Virgin Mary, and both women indeed share the impossible responsibility of holding a family together under such pressing circumstances as a son's death or moving across the world. The patriarch, on the right, is displaced from a more central position in the painting which, combined with his blank stare, suggests that his wisdom is no longer relevant in the new country. The closed lips of each member of the family suggests they have undergone a trauma that has been difficult to process and harder yet to put into words.²⁸

Tarsila do Amaral evoked the challenge for laborers in her humorously depressing 1929 "Cidade (A Rua)," [City (The Street)] in which workers are not only dwarfed by the tall buildings in São Paulo, but are then swallowed up by their boots. The boots served as synecdoche for the industrial jobs which similarly swallow up the lives of working-class laborers. Immigration and labor served as increasingly important subject matter in poetry and the visual arts, as these were causes with which the artists increasingly identified.

"Sympathy" seems more appropriate than "empathy" in describing the artists' emotions, as the elite artists identified more with the labor cause (and the romantic notion of the struggling worker) than with the workers themselves. The artists graphically pronounced solidarity with the plight of the marginalized yet wanted little to do with them in personal life. In their art, the modernists imagined themselves as taking part in the situation of the oppressed. Notable was Tarsila do Amaral's "Operários" (Workers),

²⁸ This is my own reading of Segall's "Emigrantes III," on display in the permanent collection of the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Segall, in choosing to hollow out the immigrant family's eyes, may have also been gesturing to the portraits by Italian-Jewish painter Amedeo Modigliani. Employing facial structures influenced by African Fang masks, Modigliani painted voids in the place of eyes in many of his portraits.

in which modernists Mário de Andrade, Oswald de Andrade, and Anita Malfatti appear alongside a crowd of factory workers.²⁹ But off the painted canvas, the modernist artists were pleased to maintain elite lifestyles, traveling abroad and frequenting social spaces generally inaccessible to the workers they praised.

Put another way, the modernist rejection of artistic oligarchies of form did not imply a rejection of São Paulo's economic and political leaders. It was, after all, the coffee magnate families that patronized the modernist arts and São Paulo's cultural institutions. Historian Sergio Miceli has made clear that modernism's "rejection" of European culture and Brazilian bourgeois values carried a certain amount of tongue-in-cheek. The exaggerated rejection served as artifice intended to demonstrate commality with and value for broader Brazilian society.³⁰ The cohort's larger body of work portrayed a nation in which workers, immigrants, blacks, and Amerindians alike contributed to Brazilian cultural identity. But this did not imply that these diverse groups also contributed to Brazil's political life. The period of modernism witnessed the lower and working classes enter into politics, but not as equal players. The insight from Maria Helena Rolim Capelato's work on propaganda in the Vargas era seems apt here: inclusion of the masses in political participation was less a result of gaining a voice, and more a consequence of being granted a space to listen.³¹

²⁹ "Operários" is part of the permanent collection at the Palácio Boa Vista, São Paulo.

³⁰ Miceli, *Nacional Estrangeiro*.

³¹ Maria Helena Rolim Capelato, *Multidões em Cena: Propaganda Política no Varguismo e no Peronismo*, 2nd edition (São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2009 [1998]). See also Robert Levine, "Elite Perceptions of the Povo," in Michael Coniff and Frank McCann, eds. *Modern Brazil: Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1991), which is helpful in its discussion of elite views of the masses, and yet problematically implies elite views of the masses were static throughout the entire period from 1850-1950.

The modernist movement has been praised by scholars and artists alike. Artists including Candido Portinari and Tarsila de Amaral are still recognized as among Brazil's greatest painters. Mário de Andrade, Oswald de Andrade, Manuel Bandeira, Cecília Meireles, and latecomer Carlos Drummond de Andrade have been heralded as among Brazil's strongest poets. But the movement has also had several critics.

Most recently, literary critic Francisco Foot Hardman criticized scholars in São Paulo for commemorating, in 2015, the 75th anniversary of the death of Mário de Andrade. The year witnessed various republications of the poet's works, which entered public domain. Conference talks and cultural courses on Mário de Andrade abounded in São Paulo, and the poet's house was renovated and re-opened for public visits. Even the organizers of Brazil's national literary conference, FLIP, dedicated the year's conference to this father of modernism.

Hardman argued it unacceptable for scholars today to celebrate a movement that advanced racist caricatures of Amerindians and blacks. Worse, for Hardman, defending that modernist mythology of Brazil as a harmonious blending of three races hides ongoing acts of political violence against urban black communities and Amazonian Amerindian tribes. Hardman even rebaptized the modernists as a “pau oco” (hollow wood) vanguard, playing off the *Pau Brasil* manifesto. Pau oco (Hollow wood) refers to pieces of Brazilian baroque art that the modernists themselves helped make famous—wooden religious icons ostensibly carved hollow to hold contraband. Hardman, in effect,

suggested modernists themselves hid the contraband of racism, arrogance, and regionalism inside their artistic creations.³²

Historian Carlos Eduardo Berriel has more clearly explained why such a criticism can be leveled at the modernists.³³ The modernist group celebrated the Brazilian character and psychology as conditioned through racial miscegenation and the tropical environment. Berriel argued this definition of Brazilian identity profited the patrons of the modernists, especially the bourgeois coffee families like the Prados. These families sat on a majority of land, capital, and political power. Funding nationalist artistic work could create a cultural push discouraging British intervention in the state economy—good news for the Prado-owned Paulista Railway Company. Furthermore, the creation of a fluid national identity based on racial mixing could bring ongoing political support for pro-immigration policies, assuring the maintenance a steady supply of exploitable labor. Finally, an identity built around tropical themes would naturalize the idea of Brazil's tropical economies. Creating such an imaginary would ensure the coffee economy enjoyed popular and political support. While Berriel attributes little independence and agency to the modernists—they certainly deserve more than he gives them—he is absolutely right that rich coffee families had political reasons to support the arts.³⁴

Modernism has also received criticism for the consequences of its ambivalent portrayals of Amerindians. Tracy Devine Guzmán recently included modernist art as an

³² Francisco Foot Hardman, “Matem o mito,” *Estado de São Paulo*, February 21, 2016.

³³ Carlos Eduardo Berriel, “A Uíara Enganosa,” in *Mário de Andrade Hoje*, edited by Carlos Eduardo Berriel (São Paulo: Ensaio, 1990): 133-177.

³⁴ Other historians have even uncovered the ways in which patrons, including the Prados, took active steps to influence artistic production. Miceli, *Nacional Estrangeiro*, 10-15, explains how Paulo Prado actively requested changes in painters' works before purchasing them.

example of the divorce between portrayals of natives and actual Amerindian experience.³⁵ The “Cannibalist Manifesto” redeemed early-colonial stigmas of Amerindians, appealing to Brazilians to artistically continue the work of their native ancestors. Yet, even as Oswald de Andrade inverted the colonial judgment, he furthered a deeper colonial process: caricaturing natives and denying them self-representation. Guzmán makes it quite clear that state and elites alike created representations of Amerindians in order to then justify “tutorial” programs that deny these groups full citizenship. The following chapters add to Guzmán’s scholarship, showing that the modernists’ representations of the urban working class and of Afro-Brazilians effected a similar result. The vision of the suffering worker in need of guidance would motivate the Department of Culture and Recreation to arrange a series of interventions, but according to elite decisions as to how and what should be done. The belief that Brazil was born in primitivism led to the scientific studies examined in Chapters 3 and 4, and publications that concluded Afro-Brazilians had made the strongest contributions to Brazil’s primitive mentality. With a notion that some aspects of primitivity were admirable and others were dangerous, blacks became welcomed as cultural producers but not as political and economic actors.

Indeed, the artistic portrayals of blacks, Amerindians, and the urban working class were also ambiguous because they were not set in stone in the Week of Modern Art or even after the Brazilwood and Cannibalist Manifestos. Nor were modernist cultural constructs completely contingent on the desires of rich patrons. Rather, the modernists

³⁵ Tracy Devine Guzmán, *Native and National in Brazil: Indigeneity After Independence* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

continued to re-shape their commitments throughout the 1920s and 1930s, a result of significant experiences of violence within the city of São Paulo combined with increased opportunities for political involvement.

Violence and Political Reform in São Paulo

Three outbreaks of violence in São Paulo—in 1924, 1931, and 1932—changed the local political scene, giving positions of influence to a reformist cohort made up of industrialists, educators, and those modernist artists active in journalism. The 1924 *tenentes* revolt taught this group that the masses needed to be incorporated into the local political process. Journalists and educators, in particular, became convinced that immigrants and the uneducated majority needed a stronger sense of national identity as a preventative measure to social disorder. A disruptive strike in 1931 encouraged the elite community to find ways to minimize class conflict and inculcate obedience to hierarchy from the working classes. In 1932, a brief war against the federal capital provided industrial reformists a preview of the productivity and cooperation that could result from projects of welfare capitalism. This strengthened the resolve of industrial reformers to engage the working classes in Fordist-style reform projects. The modernist artists used their increasingly-powerful position as journalists to convince their colleagues that music would bring social harmony to the city.

In urban centers in early 1920s Brazil, small groups of professionals and politicians—tied through corporate and kinship links—held power over economic and

political decisions.³⁶ Closed leadership circles inhibited promotions for even the trained and experienced members of younger generations. In the federal military, a generation of young lieutenants (*tenentes*) turned to revolt in hopes of gaining positions of power and ushering in a new style of leadership. This brought the consequence of reform projects on both local and federal levels. In São Paulo, the revolt served as a catalyst ending the Republican Party's unilateral control over São Paulo politics and provided journalists in the city a chance to wield political influence. The violence sustained by the city's residents merits attention since their subjective experience contributed to the push for social harmony in the subsequent decade.

In July 1922, a small group of *tenentes* staged a rebellion in Fort Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro.³⁷ A dismal failure, the rebellion was put down in a matter of hours. The revolt would have been inconsequential except that the government refused to grant the *tenentes* the general pardon they expected. Historian Frank McCann has shown that granting amnesty was standard practice in dealing with military revolts in early twentieth-century Brazil, meaning soldiers expected to be forgiven for their act.³⁸ But instead of extending this amnesty, the federal government indicted fifty soldiers, announcing each would be tried in court and sentenced to up to twenty years in prison. The *tenentes* felt the

³⁶ This group, only some 200-300 men, were linked through corporate and kinship networks. See Love, *São Paulo*; Joseph Love and Bert Barickman, "Regional Elites" in Michael Coniff and Frank McCann, eds. *Modern Brazil: Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1991).

³⁷ This summary of the Tenentista Revolt comes from Frank McCann, *Soldiers of the Patria: A History of the Brazilian Army, 1889-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), ch 7; Neill Macaulay, *The Prestes Column: Revolution in Brazil* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), 2-18; and Woodard, *Place in Politics*.

³⁸ McCann, *Soldiers*, 266, 289-293.

indictment served as proof of a civil society disrespectful of the army, and an army with weak and corrupt leaders subordinated to political and economic elites.

As a response, the tenentes asked more officers and followers to join their ranks. They sought additional leadership and planned another uprising, this time in São Paulo, from which they hoped to garner support from neighboring states and then march on Rio de Janeiro. On July 5, 1924—the two-year anniversary of the first revolt—the tenentes joined with sympathetic members of São Paulo’s Força Publica, and set up a base at the police headquarters. They seized police stations around the city, and wrested control of the railroad stations. After four days of gunfire, the tenentes won their first battle and the governor left the city with his forces.³⁹

The tenentes’ elation over their first victory was short-lived as they discovered the challenges of running a city with more than a half-million residents. Under military rule, the city did not conduct business as usual. Over a hundred businesses and factories suffered damages, creating a larger-than-usual unemployed population. People turned to the streets looking for food, and rioting and sacking began. Rebels initially tolerated (and even participated in) in the looting, realizing days too late that they instead needed to use force to keep order.⁴⁰

The federal army responded to the revolt, making it impossible for the tenentes to connect with other states, much less begin their approach on Rio. The Minister of War ordered General Eduardo Socrates to bring down the São Paulo insurgents. Socrates had cut his teeth during the Contestado War in Southern Brazil, a war that had prepared

³⁹ McCann, *Soldiers*, 268-270; Macaulay, *Prestes*, 2-18.

⁴⁰ McCann, *Soldiers*.

soldiers to engage brutal and uncompromising warfare against rebels. Although the São Paulo uprising differed starkly from Contestado in everything from the nature of the rebellion to the number of civilians involved, Socrates chose to treat the city no differently.⁴¹ He cut off most access points to and from the city; the rebels retained only control of railways headed out west. On July 12, Socrates ordered his artillery to shell the city. Civilian neighborhoods were hit harder than army barracks, and the city suffered hundreds of civilian casualties. The bombardment continued for more than two weeks, during which time some two hundred thousand civilians evacuated, either via train or on foot. On July 26, army airplanes dropped pamphlets informing that the rest of the city, too, needed to evacuate before the federal army entered to raze São Paulo. The rebels feared the total destruction of the city. Under the cover of the following night, the three thousand rebel soldiers slipped covertly onto trains on the western railway and headed towards the state of Mato Grosso, where they hoped to link up with sympathetic troops. Two gunners kept artillery going throughout the night, and the federal troops did not learn of the escape until morning. General Socrates called off the attack, and the federal army shortly thereafter began what would turn into a three-year chase of Homeric proportions across most of the enormous country of Brazil.⁴²

The experience profoundly impacted political life and the general way elites viewed their relationship with inhabitants of the city, especially immigrants and working-class laborers. At the beginning of the uprising, the lieutenants—looking to boost their ranks—had reached out to immigrants. Some three hundred, many of whom were

⁴¹ McCann, *Soldiers*, 271.

⁴² The chase is narrated in Macaulay, *Prestes*, who explains that the failure of the federal army to subdue the column led to extensive military reform in Brazil.

veterans of WWI, joined the call to arms.⁴³ The rebel leaders then targeted laborers for recruitment, with hundreds more joining their ranks.⁴⁴ Throughout the month of July, young labor leaders, anarchists, and socialists, championed the rebellion in written manifestos and radio speeches.⁴⁵ The labor organizers believed that if the revolt were successful workers would earn better wages, benefits, and protections. Any situation seemed better than leadership by the PRP, which did not approve of union organization and had supported the brutal repression of the last major strike in 1919. In general, the Republican Party held a close relationship with industrialists, employers, and police authorities. Together, they ensured that “social order” prevailed in labor conflicts. This meant harassment, beatings, and torture of strikers and union leaders.⁴⁶

In the wake of the uprising, journalists led a public debate in which many argued that the São Paulo government needed a different relationship with the masses, especially the immigrants and laborers. Most agreed on three necessary reforms: a secret ballot, increased education, and better programs for immigrant assimilation. Writer Monteiro Lobato argued that the Brazilian people suffered from a “spirit of revolt.” The solution, he argued, was to institute the secret ballot. This would hold government leaders accountable to keeping popular interest in mind, in turn reducing the popular urge to

⁴³ McCann, *Soldiers*, 271.

⁴⁴ Woodard, *Place in Politics*, 116.

⁴⁵ Woodard, *Place in Politics*, 112-116.

⁴⁶ The key text on labor in this period is John French, *The Brazilian Workers' ABC: Class Conflict and Alliances in Modern São Paulo* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992). French covers the 1919 strike in chs 1&2. See also Barbara Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil: Industrialists and the Remaking of the Working Class in São Paulo: 1920-1964* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

rebel.⁴⁷ Journalist Julho Mesquita Filho, head of the *Estado de São Paulo*, argued that with the secret ballot, “the liberal professions...would return [to public life], attracted by the purification of the political atmosphere.”⁴⁸ The reformists believed the secret ballot would initiate a process of uprooting corruption in the political system. Better education would then ensure the election of wise leaders.

Educational reformer Antônio Sampaio Doria suggested that, after limiting military power, education was the surest way not only to democracy but also to national salvation. Lawyer and local political representative Jorge Americano argued education alone would not solve the problem: immigrants needed to identify with the greater nation because, at the moment, they were concerned only with their own material interests.⁴⁹ Americano pushed for a much stronger program of political assimilation in order to protect the city, state, and nation.

In a series of articles entitled “The National Crisis,” journalist Mesquita Filho explicitly connected the need for political and educational reform to what he saw as the problem of Brazil’s primitive mentality. In one of his more disturbing racist comments, Mesquita Filho described São Paulo’s current “political customs” as “comparable only to some miserable agglomerations of humans that vegetate between the Pacific and the Andes.”⁵⁰ São Paulo first needed to create a new political party. The city then needed to

⁴⁷ Woodard, *Place in Politics*, 125. My discussion of the intellectual reaction to the Tenentes’ Revolt is heavily indebted to Woodard, *Place in Politics*, and Irene de Arruda Ribeiro Cardoso, *A Universidade da Comunhão Paulista: O projeto da criação da Universidade de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Editora Autores Associados, 1982).

⁴⁸ Quoted in Woodard, *Place in Politics*, 134.

⁴⁹ Jorge Americano, “A lição dos factos,” September 7, 1924, discussed in Woodard, *Place in Politics*, 129.

⁵⁰ Mesquita Filho, quoted in Cardoso, *A Universidade*, 33.

undertake the “construction of an organism that unifies our national mentality.”⁵¹ Such a “cultural organism” would “reestablish discipline in the mentality of the masses.” From there, it would not be long before “the nation calmed itself,” virtue would be instilled in the “popular consciousness,” and Brazil would achieve “collective solidarity.”⁵² Mesquita Filho’s use of the term “nation” rather than “São Paulo” may have meant he believed a change locally would reverberate throughout the entire country. If so, he was furthering a larger discourse of São Paulo as the unparalleled leader of the Brazilian nation. It is also possible that Mesquita Filho used the term “nation” to refer to what he believed to be Brazil’s distinct race. São Paulo’s political and cultural reform would then result in psychological regeneration of its residents. Indeed, Mesquita Filho sketched a picture of an undisciplined and primitive horde in need of a cultural institution able to domesticate it. This discourse remained central to the cultural projects following this moment of city-wide self-reflection.

Over the next two years, key political leaders defected from the PRP. They joined together and, in 1926, established the Democratic Party (PD).⁵³ The new party declared as its core goals the very issues that had been circulating in the public sphere over the past years. First would be an electoral overhaul: employing a secret ballot, instituting checks on vote counting, and limiting the pressure exercised by rural bosses (*coroneis*). Second, the party would work towards a reconfigured relationship with the masses. The

⁵¹ “Restar-nos-ia dar início à construção do organismo concatenador da mentalidade nacional.” The use of the word “concatenador” here refers to bringing the collective mind into a place of harmony, an image obfuscated by the chain-like image produced by the English “concatenation.” Mesquita Filho, quoted in Cardoso, *A Universidade*, 36.

⁵² Mesquita Filho, quoted in Cardoso, *A Universidade*, 36-37.

⁵³ Woodard, *Place in Politics*, 150-174.

lower and working-classes would be welcomed into the political system, but not as equals. Instead, they would be tutored as voters and receive better education. The Democratic Party leaders hoped for social harmony. To them, this meant the maintainance of oligarchic power in exchange for vaguely-outlined programs of education, culture, and limited support for labor.⁵⁴ The party relied on the musical term “harmony” in their descriptions of an ideal society. This made it easier for industrial and political leaders to accept the modernist’s proposal of using music itself to harmonize society. The modernists also benefited from stepping into positions of political power.

The creation of a two-party system in São Paulo meant that public opinion and political support had to be won, not simply assumed. As recent advances in journalism, printing, and cultural production had raised literacy and newspaper readership, political parties knew they depended on journalists, and accordingly offered strong writers positions of influence. Listed among São Paulo’s best writers were the cohort of modernist artists. The recently-created PD turned to modernist essayists Rubens Borba Alves de Moraes, Sergio Milliet, and Mário de Andrade for the production of the party’s official journal, the *Diario Nacional*. This effected an official split in the modernist group, already demarcated by personal disagreements and political stances. Oswald de Andrade stayed with the PRP, writing for their *Correio Nacional*. Shortly thereafter, modernists Ricardo Cassiano, Menotti del Picchia, and Plínio Salgado became the spokespersons for Brazil’s fascist-inspired Integralist Party. On all sides of the division, the modernists continued to use their artistic production for political ends. Cassiano, del Picchia and Salgado launched “Verde-Amarelismo” (Green-Yellowism, referring to the

⁵⁴ Miceli, *Intelectuais*, 90-93.

Brazilian flag), a movement attempting to raise nationalist sentiment in support of the Integralist party. But those working for the PD instead aligned their art with the party's goals. Over the next decade, they endeavored to use the arts to provide education to the working classes and endow immigrants with a deeper investment in things Brazilian.⁵⁵

In their bid for public support, the PD had at their advantage a central platform of labor reform. Within the circle of PD leadership sat a small but influential group of industrial reformers. This group envisioned creating an alliance across classes that featured increased protections and privileges granted to workers in exchange for an increase in productivity and the promise of an end to labor unrest. The industrial reformers drew from multiple international approaches to labor reform, most preferring the methods that relied on education to improve the technical capacities of workers and simultaneously inculcated worker docility and productivity, inside and out of the walls of the factory. According to the party's official daily, the PD committed itself to "social progress in order for an alliance among all classes cooperating in the harmonious development of society and the masses in general."⁵⁶

The industrial reform position grew stronger in the party throughout the 1920s-30s. Already in 1926, Paulo Nogueira Filho served as a founding member of the PD, and was elected as one of the party leaders.⁵⁷ An influential industrialist himself, Nogueira Filho had been adamant support of Taylorism—task-based training in factories to boost

⁵⁵ Miceli, *Intelectuais à Brasileira*, 254-5; Mário de Andrade, *Taxi e crônicas no Diário Nacional*, ed. by Telé Porto Ancona Lopez (São Paulo: Livraria Duas Cidades, 1976), features a compilation of Andrade's writings in the PD daily.

⁵⁶ *Diário Nacional* (São Paulo) March 23, 1928. Quoted in Maria Lígia Coelho Prado, *A Democracia Ilustrada: O Partido Democrático de São Paulo, 1926-1934* (São Paulo: Editora Ática, 1986), 154.

⁵⁷ Woodard, *Place in Politics*, 159.

productivity and diminish the effectiveness of strikes—in his own Santa Branca silk textile plant. In 1928, Felix Contreiras Rodrigues published the *The Social Question and the National Democratic Party*, an essay arguing that the PD was committed to a reform project influenced by the work of the French social progressive and cooperative economist Charles Gide. The project included a minimum wage, prohibitions on child labor, requirements for the factories to maintain standards of hygiene, and programs of public education.⁵⁸ Rodrigues concluded that “Resolving the Social Question is not [an issue of giving] power to today’s oppressed...but to harmonize the interests.”⁵⁹ In February 1931, PD leaders forming a commission on the “social question” published a platform on labor that openly pushed for the Gide-style reforms. They explained the belief that motivated their push for reform: “it is harmony between bosses and workers that is the fundamental law on [successful] economic life.”⁶⁰ At the same time that these local leaders argued for the need of harmony within the city, federal political changes further convinced PD leaders that labor reform needed to be top-down and conservative.

In 1930, Getulio Vargas—a politician from Brazil’s southernmost state Rio Grande do Sul, upset São Paulo’s tradition of federal political hegemony when, in a coup d’état, he ousted two Paulista presidents: the lame duck Washington Luís and the president-elect Júlio Prestes. Vargas then abrogated Brazil’s constitution.

In his first year in leadership, Vargas issued decrees that disconcerted São Paulo industrialists and the city’s two political parties. First, he legalized union membership and

⁵⁸ Felix Contreiras Rodrigues, *A Questão Social e o Partido Democrático Nacional* (Rio de Janeiro: Anuario do Brasil, 1928).

⁵⁹ Rodrigues, *Questão Social*, 274.

⁶⁰ “ser a harmonia entre patrões e operários a lei fundamental da vida econômica.” Prado, *Democracia Ilustrada*, 164.

activism. Unions in São Paulo had not met together without fear of repression since 1919, and the new law brought a massive strike in July 1931. Women and men from textile and metalworking industries left their jobs and made public demands for better wages and treatment. Within days, more than seventy-thousand workers had struck.⁶¹ Industrialists from both of São Paulo's political parties were further upset when Vargas, in 1932, decreed eight-hour limits on workdays and paid vacation time. What was more, Vargas announced his intention to actually make the decrees immediately enforceable, including asking industrialists to indemnify workers for the previous year's (unpaid) vacation labor. Worse still, factory owners feared workers would see the legislation as a reward for their recent activism.⁶² Upset at the legislation, and angry over the loss of regional autonomy, the leaders of the PD and PRP parties chose to temporarily set aside their differences and fight against the federal power. The parties joined together in the *Frente Única* (United Front) and declared war on the national capital on July 9, 1932.⁶³

Believing in their military superiority, São Paulo's state leaders thought declaration of war would mean a quick and bloodless victory over the Vargas regime.⁶⁴ But the federal district had more military strength than São Paulo expected, and the

⁶¹ Joel Wolfe, *Working Women, Working Men: São Paulo and the Rise of Brazil's Industrial Working Class, 1900-1955* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993).

⁶² Weinstein, *Social Peace*, 59-62.

⁶³ For an introduction to Getulio Vargas and the *Estado Novo*, see Robert Levine, *Father of the Poor? Vargas and His Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Weinstein provides a particularly nuanced explanation of the motivations leading to São Paulo's 1932 revolt. Weinstein, *Color of Modernity*, ch 2.

⁶⁴ Maria Helena Capelato has written extensively on the revolt and on São Paulo in this period. See, for example, Maria Helena Capelato and Maria Lígia Prado, *O Bravo Matutino: Imprensa e ideologia no jornal, "O Estado de São Paulo,"* (São Paulo: Alfa-Omega, 1980). Other helpful works on the 1932 revolt include McCann, *Soldiers*, and Ângela de Castro Gomes, "Confronto e compromisso no processo de constitucionalização (1930-1935)" in Boris Fausto and Ângela de Castro Gomes, *O Brasil republicano: sociedade e política (1930-1964)* (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1996), 7-75.

neighboring states of Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul never provided the support São Paulo had counted on. What was anticipated as a quick power play turned into a three-month armed struggle during Brazil's winter months. Federal troops overpowered and outlasted São Paulo's forces and the rebels surrendered. The 1932 defeat of the constitutionalist revolt was difficult for São Paulo's leaders to accept, and a handful of the rebel leaders went into exile for the next year or two.

Historian Barbara Weinstein has suggested the revolt of 1932 taught industrialist reformers the value of welfare capitalism and the necessity of the state intervention in worker education. When the war broke out, some industrial leaders pushed for quicker production of foodstuffs and uniforms. Others changed their factories to create munitions. An organization called the Industrial Registration and Mobilization Service, headed by Fordist reformer Roberto Simonsen (Fordism here referring not only to assembly-line production, but also to comprehensive intervention in the lives of employees, teaching them to better use recreation time in order to be more productive at work), led the push and helped factories in their transformations. In the short three months of the war, many of these factories doubled or tripled their regular rates of production. Such an experience, seen by a factory-owner, made it difficult to later settle for pre-war production rates.⁶⁵

When not all workers jumped on board to work around the clock, industrialists incentivized long shifts by providing free medical, dental, and pharmaceutical services for workers. But this did not come from the owners of the particular factories, but rather from support by the privately-funded Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo (FIESP). As a result, the funding stopped after the revolt; so did the medical services.

⁶⁵ Weinstein, *Social Peace*, 62-4.

Since not all factory owners were interested in such welfare-capitalist projects, the reformists recognized they would subsequently need the state to offer such services in order to promote the rationalization and worker care necessary for social harmony. In the wake of the revolt, FIESP leaders discussed state support for labor reform, and drafted up plans, not only for public housing and medical care, but also for building nurseries, kindergartens, and schools.⁶⁶

In 1934, Vargas conducted a constitutionalist convention, passing a new constitution which allowed for a secret vote, enfranchised women, and scheduled a presidential election for late 1937. In addition to these achievements, the constitution supported schooling with a call for federal and state governments to earmark a generous ten percent of budgets towards improving education.⁶⁷ Then, in a gesture of amnesty towards the rebellious state of São Paulo, Vargas appointed São Paulo native Armando de Salles Oliveira as interventor, or federally-appointed governor. Oliveira worked as a publisher at the Democratic Party's *O Estado de São Paulo*, and had himself been a founding member of the party.⁶⁸ The new interventor worked to regroup the members of the disbanded party and unite them with supportive veterans and reformist Republicans.

⁶⁶ Weinstein, *Social Peace*, 63-4.

⁶⁷ Two of the relevant articles include Federal Constitution, 1934, Art. 148. "Cabe à União, aos Estados e aos Municípios favorecer e animar o desenvolvimento das ciências, das artes, das letras e da cultura em geral, proteger os objetos de interesse histórico e o patrimônio artístico do País, bem como prestar assistência ao trabalhador intelectual." Federal Constitution, 1934, Art. 149. "A educação é direito de todos e deve ser ministrada, pela família e pelos Poderes Públicos, cumprindo a estes proporcioná-la a brasileiros e a estrangeiros domiciliados no País, de modo que possibilite eficientes fatores da vida moral e econômica da Nação, e desenvolva num espírito brasileiro a consciência da solidariedade humana.

⁶⁸ Woodard, *Place in Politics*, 158. In Weinstein *Social Peace*, 55, the author places Oliveira as a leader of the PD, but this seems unfounded.

This resulted in the establishment of the Constitutionalist Party (PC) with Oliveira as leader.⁶⁹

The name of the new party exemplified a broader state project: to redeem the shameful loss of the 1932 war. The Constitutionalist Party claimed the war had forced Vargas to capitulate to a constitutional convention. With this claim in mind, Oliveira's party copied much of the 1934 constitution onto São Paulo's state constitution and championed its push to spend ten percent of the state budget on education measures.⁷⁰ Yet, the nature of the party's leadership resulted in an education project that had little to do with traditional public schooling. Rather the funds supported a cultural institution promising the implementation of social harmony across the city.

First, Armando de Salles Oliveira himself formed a part of São Paulo's cohort of industrial reformers. Oliveira had been trained as an engineer, oversaw the printshop for *O Estado de São Paulo* and had sat on the organizing committee of São Paulo's Institute for the Rational Organization of Work (IDORT). As interventor, one of Oliveira's early projects had been to rationalize the state's bureaucracy: he hired IDORT to transform the state apparatus from an organization of some thirteen directories and various treasuries, to a streamlined seven departments.⁷¹ One of these was the Department of Cultural & Recreation (DC&R). In other words, the DC&R was itself born of a project of labor

⁶⁹ Miceli, *Intelectuais*.

⁷⁰ São Paulo State Constitution, 1935, Title VI "Da Educação," Art. 82. "O Estado aplicará, no serviço da educação, nunca menos de vinte por cento, e os Municípios, nunca menos de dez por cento, das rendas resultantes de impostos, sendo essa porcentagem empregada, principalmente, no ensino primário integral, ou profissional agrícola, respeitados os interesses locais." See also "Administração Municipal," *Estado de São Paulo*, March 3, 1936; "Administração Municipal (Continuação)," *Estado de São Paulo*, March 5, 1936.

⁷¹ Weinstein, *Social Peace*, 66-71.

rationalization, and then received governmental support to the extent that it spread industrial reform and social harmony through the use of music.

In journalism and politics alike, Oliveira worked alongside Paulo Duarte. Duarte had been an editor for the PD's unofficial daily *O Estado de São Paulo*. In 1934, the editor worked with like-minded leaders from the PD to found the University of São Paulo. He then worked alongside Oliveira in the establishment of the Constitutionalist Party. This earned Duarte the position of cabinet advisor to São Paulo's new mayor (*prefeito*) Fabio Prado, appointed September 1934. As advisor, Duarte was influential in Prado's decision to push for the creation of the DC&R. The editor envisioned his work in São Paulo as leading to "cultural and education reform across the nation."⁷² He also hoped that a series of successful initiatives in the city would help the state reclaim its political hegemony beginning with the presidential elections scheduled for 1937.

Mayor Fabio Prado, for his part, hoped the DC&R would become the face of his administration. Media coverage over the next three years suggested it did. The DC&R became the central target of both criticism and praise of Prado's administration. In addition, Prado pointed all visitors to the department as a sign of São Paulo's progressive political leadership. Authors, scientists, educators, and political figures visiting São Paulo met with department leader Mário de Andrade, attended the institution's concerts, visited the new children's library, and even attended musical shows performed by youth at the department's public playgrounds.

⁷² Robert Barbato Jr, *Missionários de uma utopia nacional-popular: os intelectuais e o departamento de cultura de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Annablume Fapesp, 2004): 72, 191; Paulo Duarte, *Mário por ele mesmo* (São Paulo: Prefeitura do Município de São Paulo, 1985): 55.

Prado drafted the law establishing the municipal cultural department and outlining its functions in December 1934. He then circulated the draft to the elite members of the Constitutionalist Party, including modernists Mário de Andrade, Sergio Milliet, and Rubens Borba de Moraes. He asked them to revise and change the document as they saw fit. The leadership positions were then “chosen secretly, with the singular criterion of ability to do the job.”⁷³ This allowed the modernists to be given charge of the department’s various leadership positions. Upon the creation of the DC&R, the modernist journalists hired their modernist colleagues for regular or occasional projects. Visual artists Portinari, Malfatti, and Amaral created concert programs and artwork for publications; composers Camargo Guarnieri and Francisco Mignone led the DC&R music ensembles and composed commissioned work;⁷⁴ poets Manuel Bandeira and Guilherme de Almeida aided in research and writing projects. The group dedicated itself to institutionalizing the arts as a regular part of São Paulo society.⁷⁵ Having seen their city torn apart by war twice in the last decade and further disturbed by labor unrest, the modernists joined with political and educational reformers in arguing that increased investment in the arts served as a critical prerequisite for social harmony in the city.

The political and social events of the 1920s-30s paved the way for the DC&R’s cultural interventions in the São Paulo community. Not only did the labor challenges and

⁷³ “Departamento de Cultura,” *Diario Oficial* (São Paulo), October 7, 1937.

⁷⁴ Guarnieri conducted the symphony orchestra on a rotation with Francisco Mignone and visiting conductors from other cities or countries. Regarding the department’s funding of Guarnieri’s time on exchange in Paris, see Oneyda Alvarenga to Mozart Camargo Guarnieri, correspondence, March 25, 1939. MC-C-CTL2, Fundo Mário de Andrade, Correspondência, Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros, São Paulo (hereafter cited as IEB).

⁷⁵ In personal correspondence, Andrade would later explain his goal as normalizing the arts in São Paulo society: “Não consegui fazer a única coisa que, em minha consciência justificaria o sacrificio: não consegui impor e normalizar o DC[&R] na vida paulistana.” Mário de Andrade to Paulo Duarte, reprinted in Paulo Duarte, *Mário por ele mesmo*, 159.

experiences with war convince political leaders of the need for local reforms, the experiences further convinced political leaders that such initiatives had to be guided by paternalist practices, and needed to bring social harmony to a city threatened by insurrection, immigration, and a primitive collective mentality. In great part the result of Mário de Andrade's leadership, the Constitutionalist Party turned to an intervention profoundly musical. The next chapter explores why the DC&R believed music would engender social harmony, improve factory productivity, help immigrant children identify as Brazilian, and teach the community how to "sublimate" disorderly desires.

CHAPTER II

The Department of Culture and Recreation: An Institution for Musical and Social Harmony

Introduction

In 1934, São Paulo's Constitutionalist Party won not only the symbolic victory of a federal constitutional convention but also the state congressional elections that October. From this period until the imposition of the Estado Novo at the close of 1937, São Paulo experienced a period of leadership by a team of industrialist reformers, educators, and artists. Recent experiences in the city had convinced the team of the supreme need for social harmony. Each group brought its own plans: Fordist-style reform to improve workers's lives and guarantee order in the factor; educational and psychological interventions to ensure the health of the body politic; and cultural projects to strengthen national identity and facilitate immigrant assimilation. The Department of Culture and Recreation served as an institutional nexus, borrowing from each of these strategies, and adding one more: using music to engender social harmony.

This chapter is both more and less than an institutional history of the DC&R. It analyzes the institution's organization, budget, and key projects, but does not pretend to cover every aspect of its history. Instead, it explores how the department programs reflected and implemented the leaders' strategies for arriving at social harmony. Sources come first from São Paulo's municipal archive, which holds the DC&R's official records. Additional sources come from newspapers, memoirs, personal correspondence, and department publications. The chapter opens by unpacking the belief in the power of music to bring social harmony to the community. It then examines the department's

budget, demonstrating that the institution directed the majority of its financial resources towards musical interventions. This is followed by an examination of the department's music groups and sonic projects. Finally, an analysis of two other DC&R projects—its library system and network of public playgrounds—reveals they employed the same Fordist and psychological principles as the musical interventions.

Recounting the musical projects of the DC&R makes for a pretty “loud” narrative. Yet the historical documents also feature a deafening silence.¹ They lack any mention of DC&R engagement with São Paulo's sizable Afro-Brazilian population, which historians have noted were particularly vocal in this period: the black community published newspapers, had extensive community organization, and successfully pushed for the creation of Brazil's first black political party (the *Frente Negra Brasileira*).² Considering the attention given to Africa and the Afro-Brazilian in modernism's visual arts, one might expect that this would translate into an institution foregrounding Afro-Brazilians as central to any projects related to national identity. But instead the DC&R extended their music and education programs only to elite scholars, on the one hand, and working-class immigrant communities on the other. Two conclusions will be set forward. First, São Paulo's elite wanted to use music to train workers but, like industrialists and landowners at the turn-of-the-century, these elites still preferred immigrants over blacks as laborers. As a result, when the DC&R implemented a playground program to train up the next generation of industrial workers, it targeted children in immigrant neighborhoods.

¹ Michel-Rolph Trouillot taught scholars to listen carefully to these kinds of racial silences in the historical record in his *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1995).

² Reid Andrews, *Blacks & Whites*, 139-155; Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*; Kim Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won: Brazilians in Post-Abolition São Paulo and Salvador* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1998).

Second, the archival silence suggests that the modernist assertion that blacks were fecund subjects for artistic representation carried with it the notion that Afro-Brazilian contributions to Brazil had been limited to the spheres of culture and labor. This justified the exclusion of Afro-Brazilian from politics, higher education, and positions of economic leadership. Even within the cultural arena, the modernists recognized Afro-Brazilians as producers of only folklore, never of high art. Concerned with raising up professional musicians and creating nationalist symphonies (works of high art), the DC&R passed over black musicians. This chapter now turns to those projects, beginning with the musical ideas that motivated them.

Socialization through Music

Leaders of the DC&R first viewed music as uniquely poised to heal and unite a city torn apart by racial, ethnic, and military struggles. Discussing the purpose of the new institution, mayor Fabio Prado explained: “When ambitions rub against each other in [periods of] grave convulsions...only culture is capable of quieting the noise without harmony.”³ Of the various musical projects, singing together would most effectively teach people to live together in peace. Choral singing, in the words of department leader Mário de Andrade, served as “the supreme socializer” and “united individuals.”⁴ DC&R composer and conductor Francisco Mignone agreed, committing to writing music dealing with “profoundly social themes” and setting these to opera or choir music. These genres,

³ “Quando as ambições se entrecrocaram nas convulsões gravessó a cultura é capaz de fazer calar o ruído sem harmonia e iluminar outra vez as consciências.” Fabio Prado, speaking of the opening of the DC&R, quoted in Barbato Jr. *Missionários*, 105.

⁴ Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, Of. 106, October 15, 1935, Collection Departamento de Cultura (hereafter cited as DC), caixa 18, Arquivo Histórico de São Paulo, São Paulo (hereafter cited as AHSP); Andrade, *Ensaio sobre a musica brasileira*, 65.

wrote Mignone, employed the human voice and were thus the “most social forms of music.”⁵ Music librarian Oneyda Alvarenga employed medical and psychological terminology to explain the social power of music: singing “awoke more emotions” than even instrumental music and would always “come closer to touching the nervous system.”⁶ The DC&R believed that learning to sing together meant learning to live together; social harmony came as a result of musical harmony. What is more, the projects suggest the department leaders saw choral singing and concert music as the most effective ways to experience unity.

Department leaders then believed music to be uniquely positioned to educate the lower and working classes. Journalist and cabinet advisor Paulo Duarte suggested listening to music would appeal to the masses more than reading books. He championed the DC&R’s music library, writing that it “substituted the arid theories of books with lively music, music brought to life [*música viva, música realizada*].”⁷ Mário de Andrade explained that if music was made available and affordable, it would teach groups “less [financially] equipped with means to cultivate themselves.” Additionally, if blasted through a radio, music would be a valuable strategy for educating the lower-classes, which Andrade labeled as “passive in education and suggestion.”⁸ Whereas books had to

⁵ Francisco Mignone. *A parte do anjo: Autocrítica de um cinquentenário* (São Paulo: ES Mangione, 1947), 48.

⁶ Oneyda Alvarenga, *Linguagem Musical*, reproduced in entirety in Luciana Barongeno, “Ainda sinto umas cócegas de explicar certas coisas: Mário de Andrade, professor de Oneyda Alvarenga” (PhD diss, Universidade de São Paulo, 2014), 86.

⁷ “Departamento de Cultura,” *Diário Oficial*, October 7, 1937.

⁸ “menos providas de meios para se cultivar” and “passível de educação e sugestão.” Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, February 17, 1936. DC, Caixa 6, AHSP.

be read actively, music could teach audiences that, as Andrade's comments imply, lacked motivation to pursue their own education.

Music was next defended as a critical addition to the project of Fordism championed by the industrial reformists connected to the Constitutionalist Party. At the height of the DC&R's institutional work, Andrade wrote an essay arguing the city could become more productive through the use of ubiquitous, constant government radio broadcasting. In the musical-industrial city he hoped for, harmonious chords entered homes every morning as collective alarm clocks. Brisk tempos "incit[ed] each individual to exercise, shower, and go to work happily." Arriving at the factory, workers heard upbeat rhythms, moving them to be work at a steady, productive pace. Only at lunch would São Paulo's Italian operas be permitted, since the "banal" and "superficial" tunes facilitated conversation and might aid digestion. Nothing "passionate, violent, or martial" would be permitted after eight p.m., in order to help "children, infirm, factory workers, and mothers fall asleep."⁹

Not only would music perfect the rationalization within the factory, but also worker's lives outside of it. The week before he assumed his role as DC&R Director, Andrade had explained the institution would serve the Paulistano as "a reliable guide making him live with more pleasure, and elevate how he utilizes his freetime."¹⁰ The government institution was a "didactic entity. But, whereas gymnasiums and various schools teach us about political, social, and scientific life, it could be said that the

⁹ Andrade, *Namoros*, 55-6.

¹⁰ "Novo e Fecundo," *Diario da Noite*, São Paulo, May 31, 1935.

Department of Culture and Recreation teaches us to live.”¹¹ By blending Fordist-reform and public education with music, the department endeavored to teach workers how to best spend their freetime.

Finally, the leaders believed music to be an effective tool in the process of immigrant assimilation. Already in the 1920s Andrade had argued that Brazilian folkloric music was intimately bound up with Brazil’s collective psychology since it came from straight from the “masses’ unconscious” [inconsciência do povo].¹² Music possessed the nation’s “racial totality.” In particular, he argued “Brazilian popular music is the most complete, most completely national, strongest creation of our race.”¹³ Composers and conductors at the DC&R accepted this line of thinking. Francisco Mignone—one of the conductors for the São Paulo municipal orchestra—wrote in his memoirs that he dedicated his professional life to studying the “psychological expression of Brazilian music.”¹⁴ The composer hoped this would allow him compose in line with the collective Brazilian psychology, at which point his music would “awaken the tenderness and longing [saudade] of the Brazilian masses.”¹⁵

Mignone was not alone in thinking that music rooted in Brazilian psychology could awake that same mentality in others: the DC&R leaders believed that singing Brazilian songs would help immigrants identify with the Brazilian “race” and nation. Alvarenga explained that national hymns and parade marches, especially, worked to

¹¹ “Novo e Fecundo,” *Diario da Noite*, São Paulo, May 31, 1935.

¹² Andrade, *Ensaio*, 16, 43.

¹³ Andrade, *Ensaio*, 24.

¹⁴ Francisco Mignone, *Parte do anjo*, 41-2.

¹⁵ Mignone, *Parte do anjo*, 47.

“awaken patriotic ardor through the spoken text and dynamize [the body] through the music.” Together, music and lyrics channeled singers’ energies into seeing and feeling themselves as part of a unified nation, provoking a “strong racial feeling.”¹⁶ In other words, singing patriotic songs would help immigrants feel Brazilian.

In sum, the leaders of the department argued music could efficiently address São Paulo’s most pressing needs. Concerts provided a means of spreading education to the masses in a way that conformed with elite notions of the lower classes as “passive” and unmotivated. Radio broadcasting was presented as an improvement on Fordist reform, boosting worker productivity and directing leisure time. Choral singing and its performance was championed as uniting individuals and bringing social harmony to communities. Finally, because of the sustained connection between music and Brazil’s “national psychology,” songs could quicken the assimilation process and help immigrants more deeply identify with the Brazilian nation. Each of these views of music dovetailed with the goals of the industrial reformers, educators, and modernist artists of the Constitutionalist Party backing the DC&R. The connection not only helped the modernist artists get support for the creation of the institution, it also explains why mayor Fabio Prado was willing to sign off on budget proposals channeled such a high percentage of the city’s education budget on music.

¹⁶ “Os hinos patrióticos e as marchas de guerra obedecem à mesma orientação interessada e tendem ao mesmo fim: despertar pelo texto comentado e dinamizado pela música o mesmo ardor patriótico...provocam um sentimento racial forte.” Alvarenga, *Linguagem Musical*, in Barongeno, “Ainda,” 85.

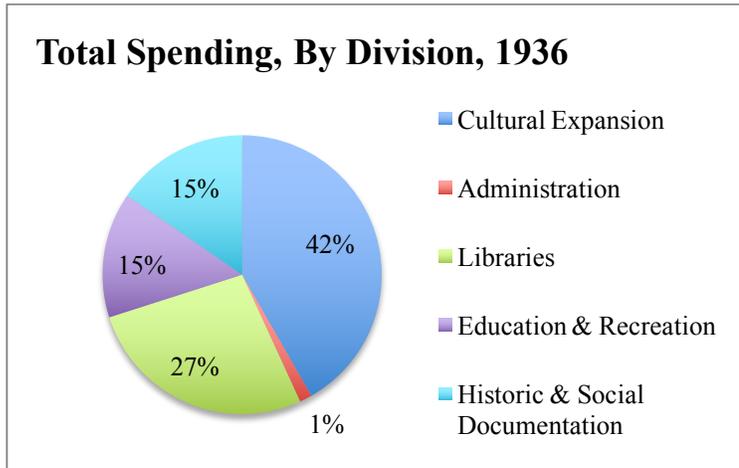
Finances

The DC&R's 1936 and 1968 approved budget proposals, reveal the Department made musical projects their financial priority.¹⁷ The budget proposals allocated money between the department's five divisions: Administration; Cultural Expansion; Libraries; Education and Recreation; and Social and Historic Documentation. The Division of Cultural Expansion oversaw the majority of the music projects and, as such, consistently received the lion's share of the department funds. Among other projects, the division managed the Teatro Municipal, oversaw the municipal choir and symphony orchestra, and created a music library for the city. In 1936, the DC&R dedicated the bulk of their annual budget to this division [Figure 2.1].

¹⁷ 1936 Budget Proposal: Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, Of. 106. October 15, 1935. DC, caixa 18, AHSP. 1938 Budget Proposal: Mário de Andrade to Diretor do Departamento de Fazenda, correspondence, August 14, 1937. DC, caixa 78, AHSP.

Figure 2.1. Total Spending, By Division, 1936 (in mil-reis)¹⁸

Cultural Expansion: 1,483,400
Administration: 51,200
Libraries: 954,760
Education & Recreation: 517,000
Historic & Social Documentation: 547,100

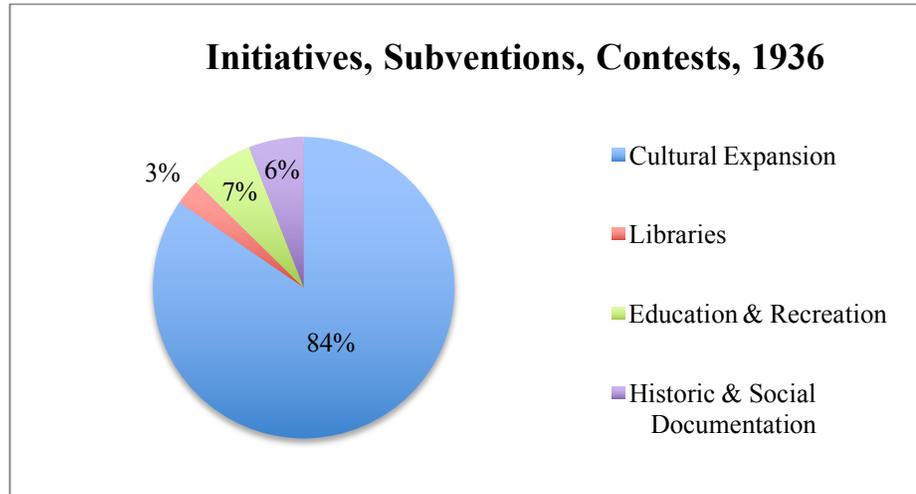


Beyond payroll, Cultural Expansion funds went to performances, composition contests, and purchases for the music library. Then, of the money budgeted for initiatives, subventions, and contests, 84% went directly to music projects [Figure 2.2].

¹⁸ In the 1930s, Brazil used *mil-reis* as their currency, with one mil-reis written 1\$000. A thousand *mil-reis* (Rs 1:000\$000) was called a *conto*. In August, 1937, the exchange rate was Rs 15\$450 = US \$1, documented in DC, caixa 22, AHSP.

Figure 2.2. Initiatives, Subventions, and Contests, 1936 (in mil-reis)

Cultural Expansion: 915,600
Libraries: 30,000
Education & Recreation: 73,000
Historic & Social Documentation: 64,000



Cultural Expansion used “initiative” funds to pay their choral group and chamber musicians. The category then paid travel fees for musicians and directors so that experts from other cities, including conductor Francisco Mignone, could work with the São Paulo orchestra. The fund also allowed local composers and musicians to travel to other cities or countries for performance or studies. The “subventions” fund first remunerated the local police band for bimonthly concerts and, second, paid a local theater group to put on two free performances every week. The various musical and historical contests funded by the “contest” category are discussed below.¹⁹

In the 1936 budget proposal, Andrade promised that within six months of receiving the funds, São Paulo would have a symphony orchestra, a chamber group on

¹⁹ 1936 Budget Proposal, AHSP.

retainer, and a local choir performing rigorous pieces. In addition, the city would have a public music library with listening stations. The music library, Andrade assured, would be “incomparable to anything in South America.”²⁰ The DC&R made good on its commitment, quickly forming the musical groups and establishing the listening library.

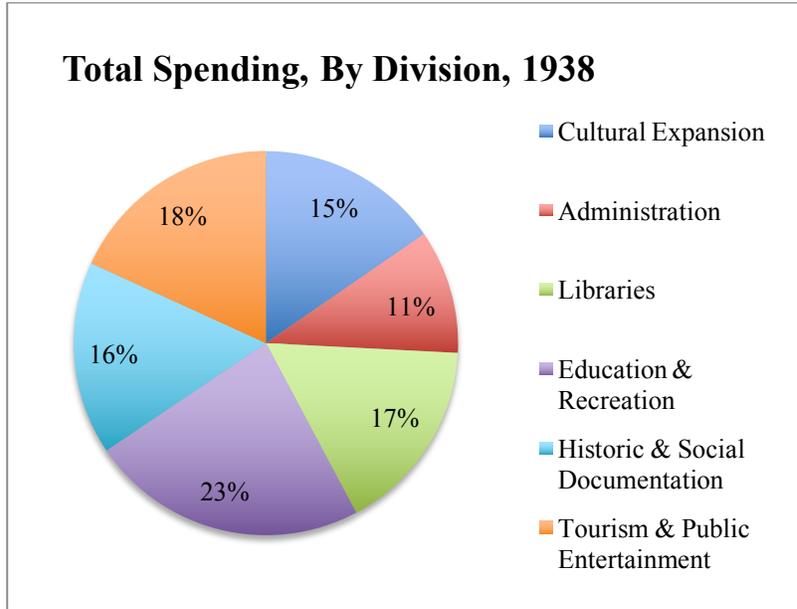
While the 1938 proposal [Figure 2.3] featured a budget more equitably spread between divisions, a close look reveals this was not a result of decreased music spending. Between 1936 and 1938, the budget grew by 76 percent.²¹ These extra funds did not go towards further employment, as attested by the decreased percentage spent on employment from 1936 to 1938 [Figures 2.4 and 2.5]. Instead, the money went to construction projects and publications promoting the institution’s work. The DC&R still had a non-construction budget that outsized the 1936 budget, allowing the department to continue their music projects.

²⁰ “Discoteca Pública incomparável na América do Sul,” Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, October 15, 1935. DC, caixa 17, AHSP.

²¹ The total budget proposed and approved in October 1936 (3,499,660\$000) was significantly smaller than the number cited by Fabio Prado in a newspaper interview in March 1936 (4,943,600\$000). Prado may have exaggerated the figures in order to highlight his generosity. Another possibility was that Prado had increased funding upon seeing the funds available for 1936. Both Andrade’s budget proposal and Prado’s interview emphasize that the DC&R was to benefit from a full ten percent of the municipal budget.

Figure 2.3. Total Spending, by Division, 1938 (in mil-reis)

Cultural Expansion: 945,506.6
Administration: 641,600
Libraries: 1,008,000
Education & Recreation: 1,435,750
Historic & Social Documentation: 1,000,441
Tourism & Public Entertainment: 1,117,460



Note: For 1938, the Division of Tourism and Public Entertainment had its own budget section. In the 1936 proposed budget, this section had been nestled underneath the Division of Education and Recreation.

Figure 2.4. Expense Types, 1936 (in mil-reis)

Employees : 1,358,300
All Materials: 912,660
Initiatives, Subventions, Contests: 1,028,600
Assorted Bills: 200,100

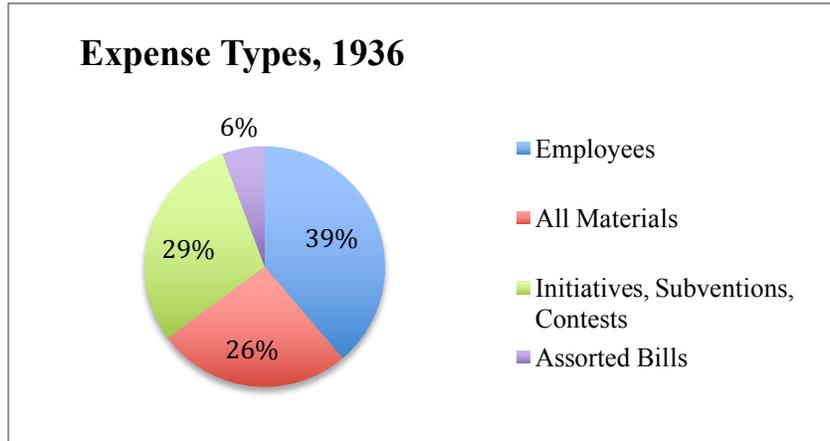
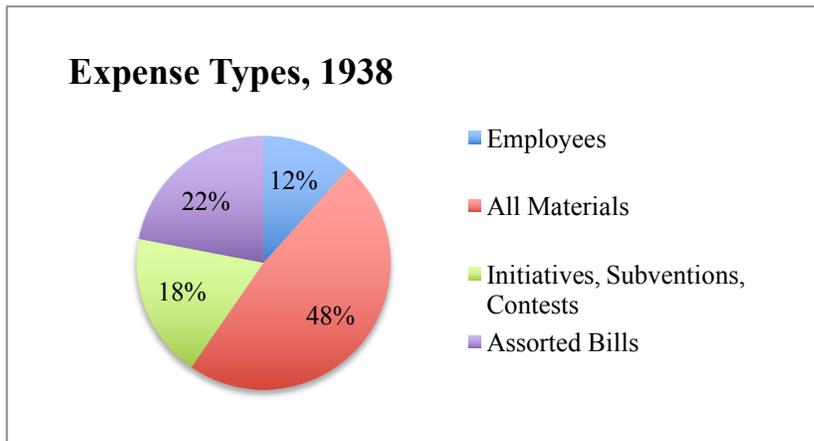


Figure 2.5. Expense Types, 1938 (in mil-reis)

Employees: 716,840
All Materials: 2,949,317.6
Initiatives, Subventions, Contests: 1,131,000
Assorted Bills: 1,351,600

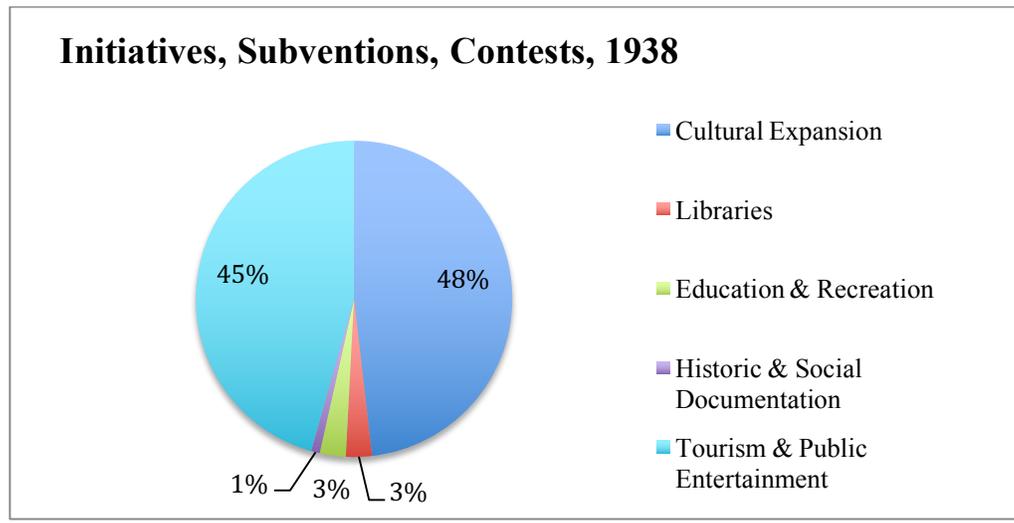


In 1937, the DC&R established an additional division to fund the city's music projects. Whereas in 1936 Cultural Expansion paid for public festivities, carnival music

contests, and the military band concerts, in 1938 this all shifted over to the newly-created Division of Public Entertainment and Tourism. Figure 2.6 therefore shows that 93% of the DC&R's funds for initiatives, contests, and subventions were channeled to the two divisions financing music projects and performances.²² In sum, the DC&R invested heavily in music. The exploration of those projects themselves reveals the ways in which department leaders tried to use music education and performance to educate the masses, advance immigrant assimilation, and direct how workers spent their free time.

Figure 2.6. Initiatives, Subventions, and Contests, 1938 (in mil-reis)

Cultural Expansion: 545,000
 Libraries: 30,000
 Education & Recreation: 30,000
 Historic & Social Documentation: 10,000
 Tourism & Public Entertainment: 516,000



²² 1938 Budget Proposal, AHSP.

Music

The DC&R entrusted Cultural Expansion with the tasks of realizing musical interventions across the city and directing ethnographic interventions across the nation. While the ethnographic projects are examined in the Chapters 3 and 4, this is not to imply they were divorced from the local musical initiatives. On the contrary, music and ethnography were bound together in the DC&R's modernist project. The ethnographers collected and organized artifacts from Brazil's rural and northeastern regions. Back in the city, they organized the collections, studying and writing about them in hopes that local artists would use the material to produce nationalist art and music to be broadcast across the city.

Cultural Expansion focused most heavily on three musical projects: *concurros musicais*, or music contests, local performances, and a music library. A fourth project, a public radio station that would fill the air with concert music and scholarly lectures, never got off the ground. The initiatives were designed as a series of musical interventions that would effect a sonic socialization of the city. DC&R leaders heavily invested in the idea that music was the most effective form of education for the masses. But the results were uneven.

While the DC&R held all sorts of competitions, the music contests were by far the most frequent and widely publicized.²³ To begin with, Cultural Expansion sponsored

²³ The list of budgeted contests for each division can be found in Ato 861: Article 14, piece 4; Article 38, piece 5; Article 58, item C; Article 63; item H; DC, AHSP. The budget for the *concurros* is found in the 1936 Budget Proposal, AHSP, and also in Mário de Andrade to Diretor do Departamento do Expediente e do Pessoal, correspondence, October 15, 1936. DC, caixa 78, AHSP. The history-book contest was so little publicized in its first year that there were no entries. Sergio M. Costa e Silva wrote to Andrade: "Não se tendo realizado no ano passado, por ausencia de concorrentes, o concurso historico, ficou em poder desta

annual competitions for a brass band suite (featuring traditional Brazilian *samba* or *marchinha* rhythms); a piece for a trio/quartet chamber group; and a work of concert music arranged for an orchestra. The musical forms aligned with the groups that the Division of Cultural Expansion had on retainer; the contests functioned as a way to commission nationalist (and regionalist) pieces to be played by the city's music groups.

In addition to the annual musical contests, Cultural Expansion hosted contests commissioning additional musical pieces for special festivals or cultural events. In one case, Cultural Expansion planned a contest to provide music for 50-year anniversary of the abolition of slavery.²⁴ The musical piece in question was to be written for a band, kept under twelve minutes, and had to employ Afro-Brazilian melodies pulled from a collection of musical folklore.²⁵ On another occasion, Cultural Expansion encouraged composers to write a piece for a small instrumental ensemble in the *choro* genre. This was a style of urban music born in turn-of-the-century Rio de Janeiro when erudite musicians pulled out instruments after rehearsals and improvised alongside popular musicians. Andrade wrote the contest guidelines himself, specifying the division would look for pieces written for “nationalized instruments,” which, as a *choro*, could include such instruments as a guitar, clarinet, flute, or even tambourine.²⁶

Divisão a importância de 10:000\$000 (dez contos) correspondentes aos prêmios a serem distribuídos.” Costa e Silva to Mário de Andrade, correspondence, February 4, 1937. DC, caixa 23, AHSP.

²⁴ “Cinquentenário da abolição,” MA-MMA-030. Fundo Mário de Andrade, Manuscritos, IEB.

²⁵ The contest was promoted in September 1937, but the pieces were never performed, as the celebration was reduced in scale after the 1938 budget cuts and demission of Mário de Andrade. “Concurso Duma Abertura Para Banda,” 30 September, 1937. DC, Caixa 21, AHSP.

²⁶ Andrade wrote the work was to be arranged for a “pequena orquestra de 10 a 15 instrumentos já nacionalizados,” Mário de Andrade to Sr. Diretor do Departamento de Expediente e do Pessoal, correspondence, February 17, 1937. DC, caixa 18, AHSP. See Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio*, 55, for an explanation of what Andrade meant by “nationalized instruments.”

Specific instructions guided the entries for each musical contest. The instructions came straight from Andrade's own 1928 handbook on nationalist music. The *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira* (Essay on Brazilian Music)—the primary reference for Brazil's nationalist composers until the 1950s—exhorted composers to create music reflecting national history, identity, and folklore. Musical works needed to be Brazilian in both form and content. In composing themes—the main musical statements in a section of concert music—artists would, at minimum, draw from a folkloric melody. But, when possible, they would move beyond the “discretionary and dilettantish choice of elements” and instead root their work in the “unconscious of the masses” [inconsciencia do povo].²⁷ Newspaper announcements for the various contests included instructions that paraphrased or borrowed directly from the *Ensaio*. A March 1936 announcement, for example, explained the “works, in some form ought be inspired by rhythmic and melodic characteristics, tendencies, and processes of national Brazilian music.”²⁸ But it would be to the judging committee's “preference” that the composer present themes “freely invented by the composer himself” rather than relying on “themes taken directly from Brazilian musical folklore.”²⁹ The only clear difference between the 1928 *Ensaio* and the requirements for the Department contests consisted in the addition of regionalist themes

²⁷ Andrade, *Ensaio*, 16.

²⁸ “as obras, de qualquer maneira deverão se inspirar nos caracteres, tendências e processos ritmico-melódicos de música nacional brasileiro.” Mário de Andrade to Director of Departamento do Expediente e do Pessoal, correspondence, March 18, 1936. DC, caixa 16, AHSP.

²⁹ See a varied list of concurso musical requirements in Mário de Andrade to Sr. Diretor do Departamento de Expediente e do Pessoal, correspondence, February 17, 1937. DC, caixa 18, AHSP. Explicit overlap between the published instructions and Andrade's essay can be seen, for example, in Andrade's request for composers to do more than create a simple pastiche of Amerindian melodies, which aligns exactly with Andrade, *Ensaio*, 15-16. Mário de Andrade to Sr. Diretor do Departamento do Expediente e do Pessoal, correspondence, March 18, 1936. DC, caixa 16, AHSP.

to nationalist ones. Instructions for a 1937 competition highlighted that “the lyrics ought, in some form, to make reference to São Paulo or Paulistan topics.”³⁰

The most valued prize-winning compositions was one that, beyond following Andrade’s guidelines, had been inspired by the Department leader himself. Pianist João de Souza Lima set Andrade’s text “Amador Bueno” to music in his award-winning symphonic poem “O Rei Mameluco.” As an additional award to the composer, the piece was performed on the closing night of the DC&R’s 1937 “Congress on Singing the National Language,” along with a ballet by Francisco Mignone, also based on text by Andrade. Both pieces will be examined in Chapter 5.³¹

By their nature, the musical contests allowed only very limited public participation. This was because composing in the contest genres—and writing for an orchestra, string quartet, or brass band—required an extensive knowledge of music theory and harmony, not to mention a working knowledge of sheet music. As a result, contest applicants were made up of a small pool of local musicians and composers who already knew each other. Through their series of contests, the DC&R served as an institution patronizing artists willing to compose in accordance with the method and thematic content established by Andrade and the modernists.

³⁰ Correspondência expedida, November 10, 1936. DC, caixa 16, AHSP.

³¹ The list of contest winners can be found in DC, caixa 78, AHSP. Souza Lima thanked composer Francisco Mignone for helping him in the musical contest. João de Souza Lima to Francisco Mignone, correspondence, March 11, 1937. MA-C-CT69, Correspondência, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB. Andrade’s text and instructions for two contest-winning compositions can be found in “Maracatu do Chico Rei,” MA-MMA-086, Manuscritos, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB. The conference program for the *Congresso da Língua Nacional Cantada*, in which the contest winners had their pieces performed, is reproduced in *Anais do Primeiro Congresso da Língua Nacional Cantada*. Various contributors. (Editora Departamento de Cultura, São Paulo), 1938.

The DC&R also served as the most important employer of musicians throughout the city of São Paulo. Immediately after stepping into his position, Andrade—who sat at the chair of both the Division of Cultural Expansion and the broader DC&R—set out to organize a government-funded municipal orchestra. Before the DC&R, the only symphony orchestra in the city was privately maintained by the Society of Artistic Culture [*Sociedade de Cultura Artística*] and led by Esther Mesquita, whose father ran the *Estado de São Paulo* newspaper championing the Constitutionalist Party.³² Instead of creating a new orchestra, the DC&R contracted this pre-existing one. This provided the orchestra with financial security and better promotion of events. In turn, the orchestra agreed to begin an additional concert series targeting an audience unaccustomed to visiting the theater. For these concerts, no one had to be a member of the theater, and all seats were sold at an affordable price [*preços populares*]. The Division of Cultural Expansion asked to organize and direct these eight additional performances itself, contracting their own conductor for each concert and selecting the pieces performed. Most important, this meant the DC&R could premiere the prize-winning pieces from the musical contests.³³

Cultural Expansion also contracted the *Banda da Música das Forças Públicas de São Paulo* (Musical Band of the Public Forces of São Paulo), or police band. Before the creation of the DC&R, the band had played shows twice a month, one in the Jardim da

³² Flavia Camargo Toni, “Uma Orquestra Sinfônica para São Paulo,” *Revista Música*, São Paulo, 6,1-2 (May-Nov, 1995): 122-149.

³³ Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, October 22, 1935. DC, caixa 33; AHSP. This contract required the orchestra to perform a minimum of 17 concerts in 1936. A latter document reveals that this number was reduced over the next two years because of union disputes. The *Sindicato Centro Musical de São Paulo* (a music union) worked alongside the symphony orchestra, pushing for fewer concerts and increased remuneration. The contract was set at 16 concerts in 1937, and 14 in 1938. See Paulo Magalhaes to Mário de Andrade, correspondence, March 8, 1938. DC, caixa 76; AHSP.

Luz and the other in front of the Theatro Municipal.³⁴ But working with Cultural Expansion, the Police Band's earnings jumped from 39 to 50 *contos* annually (a thousand mil-reis made a conto), played additional concerts (up to six a month), and performed in additional locations.³⁵

The musical division established the *Coral Paulistano* (São Paulo Choir) in February 1936.³⁶ Singers auditioned, with those selected signing a six-month contract. The chorus featured just over twenty singers. After the first semester, half of the initial singers were rehired. The others either quit or were not invited back. After the second hire, Cultural Expansion had finally consolidated the group of singers they desired for the chorus, and most singers stayed with the choir at least through 1938.³⁷ As part of their contract, singers agreed to attend rehearsals, perform concerts, and give two hours additional time each month to serve in other Department activities. In addition, they agreed not to sing in other choirs.³⁸

With a consolidated choir, Andrade hired a vocal professor to work with the choral students on vocal technique and artistic interpretation. Vera Janacopulos taught five vocal courses a week, working with a total of thirty students. This included three

³⁴ *Jardim da Luz* translates as "Garden of Light." The public park received its name because of its location right across the street from the city's central train station, Estação de Luz (Light Station).

³⁵ Before the foundation of the DC&R, the police band received a yearly budget of 39 contos for playing these shows, paid by the Administrator of the Public Gardens of the city: Arturo Azet to Diretor do Thesouro Municipal, correspondence, January 22, 1935. DC, caixa 71, AHSP. After signing to work with the department, the police band began to receive 50 contos annually: 1938 Budget Proposal, AHSP.

³⁶ The earliest contracts of São Paulo choristers on record in the municipal archive date February 1936: Contracts, August 24, 1936. DC, caixa 6, AHSP.

³⁷ All of the 1937 contracts are renewals of the August-December 1936 singers: Contracts, August 24, 1936. DC, caixa 6; AHSP.

³⁸ Contracts, August 24, 1936. DC, caixa 6; AHSP.

courses of vocal technique for beginners, a vocal technique course for advanced students, and a class on music interpretation. Janacopulos designed the latter class for advanced students, but required the beginners to audit the course.³⁹

In August 1936, the DC&R created a second choir called the *Coral Popular*, or Popular Choir. This was an open and unpaid group; it invited all singers, and required no auditions. More than a hundred people joined. Lacking additional rehearsal space in the Theatro Municipal, Andrade rented out an additional rehearsal room at the conservatory in which he himself had been a professor.⁴⁰

In addition to playing concerts, musicians working for the Department performed at small events across the city, and even participated on at least one excursion to serve as musical ambassadors for the department. In September 1935, Rio de Janeiro's Radio Tupi made its debut as a new and promising commercial radio station. Andrade wanted to promote his recently-created institution at the musical event. He also hoped to learn about the radio station since the DC&R planned to launch its own station in the following years. Cultural Expansion put together a musical trio and sent the musicians with Andrade to Rio, where they played shows each evening from September 24-27.⁴¹ Radio Tupi received the trio well, and publically thanked São Paulo's Department of Culture each night after the show.⁴² Artists felt they were representing their city to the national capital. The violinist and chamber singer told local reporters that "as representatives of paulista

³⁹ "Curso Publico de Canto em S Paulo," November 13, 1936. DC, caixa 16, AHSP. Fabio Prado approved the course proposal and budgets on January 8, 1937. In addition, see the newspaper reviews of the Mid-week concert of the *Congresso da Lingua Nacional Cantada*, featuring the soloists that had spent the year working under the training of Janacopulos. *Estado de São Paulo*, July 13, 1937.

⁴⁰ Prestação de Contas, August 1936. DC, caixa 19, AHSP.

⁴¹ Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, September 10, 1935. DC, caixa 70, AHSP.

⁴² Fabio Prado to Mário de Andrade, correspondence, October 16, 1935. DC, caixa 70, AHSP.

art, [we hope to] elevate São Paulo's artistic renown." The pianist chimed in that she felt an "enormous responsibility" to not discredit her city's artistic reputation.⁴³

While each music group had its own responsibilities and shows, all groups worked together to host the Department's larger cultural events. At academic conferences, cultural congresses, and commemorative events, these groups came together to perform highlights of their repertoire in addition to interpreting the new works commissioned for the occasion. But Department leaders were not content with concerts alone. They also believed residents needed a way to expand their understanding of music on a daily basis. This conviction motivated the creation of São Paulo's local Music Library.

A month after stepping into his position as director of Cultural Expansion, Andrade wrote to mayor Fabio Prado asking for a budget of forty contos to launch the *Discoteca Pública Municipal*, or Music Library.⁴⁴ The mayor's office approved the budget, allowing Andrade to hire his favorite piano student Oneyda Alvarenga as the music librarian.⁴⁵ The Music Library further employed four assistants and an office boy. Of the start-up budget, twenty-five contos were earmarked for the purchase of recordings of classical music, allowing for the purchase of a thousand discs.⁴⁶

The DC&R designed the Music Library as a place for both music scholarship and public listening. In addition to the discs, the library purchased and catalogued the sheet

⁴³ *O Jornal*, Rio de Janeiro, September 25, 1935, 3.

⁴⁴ Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, July 19, 1935. DC, caixa 70, AHSP.

⁴⁵ Legislation, Acto 861, Article 31, May 30, 1935. DC, caixa 12, AHSP. See also Fabio Prado to Mário de Andrade, correspondence, August 10, 1935. DC, caixa 70, AHSP. Then see Mário de Andrade and Oneyda Alvarenga, *Cartas: Mário de Andrade, Oneyda Alvarenga* (São Paulo: Livraria Duas Cidades, 1983), 125.

⁴⁶ Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, July 19, 1935. DC, caixa 70, AHSP.

music to be used by the orchestra and choirs.⁴⁷ Alvarenga bought works from across Brazil, the US, and Europe. This allowed local musicians to gain familiarity with new works, and gave the department's music groups the chance to expand their performance repertoire in a period in which orchestral sheet music was not widely accessible.

The library worked to train the ears of public listeners, improve their familiarity with concert music, and adjust their musical taste. The Music Library featured listening labs in which visitors could listen up to five discs each day. These ranged from classical European music to recent compositions by Brazilian erudite composers. The library had few commercial popular recordings, evidence of the library's twin goals of guiding cultural taste on the one hand and serving as a space for elite scholarship on the other.

The Music Library was guided in the sense that its leaders believed they should lead listeners towards certain genres and artists, instead of letting the public discover music on its own. Alvarenga explained that she preferred young visitors since they were "more malleable...in the formation of an overall good taste in the [musical] arts."⁴⁸ Just as a teacher builds a student's vocabulary in preparation for complicated texts, so too Alvarenga pushed listeners to become accustomed to new sounds so they would appreciate more complicated harmonies and rhythms. The music librarian hung up signs in the music library that read: "Modern music merits your attention. If it appears

⁴⁷ Oneyda Alvarenga to Chefe de Secção da Radio Escola, correspondence, February 5, 1936. DC, caixa 73, AHSP.

⁴⁸ "E nada melhor que tal ação se exerça particularmente sôbre os estudantes, gente moça, como tal maleável e mais apta que nenhuma outra a concorrer para a formação de um bom gôsto artístico generalizado." Oneyda Alvarenga, *Discoteca Publica Municipal* (São Paulo: Departamento de Cultura, 1942).

aggressive to you upon your first hearings, the habit of listening to it will make these impressions disappear.”⁴⁹

Certain genres were preferable over others. Andrade denounced the Italian-dominated opera industry, saying it enjoyed wide popularity only because it “appealed to the sensuality and even the sexuality of the spectator-listener” while Alvarenga, in turn, exclaimed that “the grave problem of the love of Italian opera merits some censorship [measures].”⁵⁰ Nor was the library a space for popular commercial music. Paulo Duarte clarified, “The aim of the Music Library...is not to please enlightened listeners or even give discs to enthusiasts of carnival marches, which are available all over the city. There are hundreds of intelligent [minds] waiting to be cultivated.”

Alvarenga’s signs appear to have been hung in vain; few members of São Paulo’s public wanted their musical taste redirected. The visitor log suggests that, in early 1936, the library had an average of just two visitors a day. Even at its height in 1940, the Discoteca received a daily stream of only twenty listeners. Over the course of the year, many of these were likely repeat visitors. Any attempt to promote nationalist erudite music was an even greater failure: half of the visitors listened to nineteenth-century music, and only two to three percent were listening to music by Brazilian composers.⁵¹ In sum, the library did not succeed in reorienting the musical taste of the wider São Paulo population.

⁴⁹ “A música moderna merece sua atenção. Se lhe parecer agressiva nas primeira audições, o habito de ouvi-la fará desaparecer essa impressão.” Alvarenga, *Discoteca Publica Municipal*, 89.

⁵⁰ Both Andrade and Alvarenga quotes come from Alvarenga, *Discoteca Publica Municipal*, 94.

⁵¹ Alvarenga, *Discoteca Publica Municipal*.

Yet the Music Library cannot be written off as a failure; Cultural Expansion had also envisioned the Music Library as a space for elite composers and scholars to study Brazilian music and then produce either nationalist music or research to be shared with the community. First, Andrade encouraged Alvarenga to take the time to build an admirable collection of discs and to listen to as many pieces as possible, taking notes and planning lectures. Cultural Expansion then began to reach out to the general public with a regular program of lectures on musical appreciation. Alvarenga began to give these lectures at the Theatro Municipal in early 1938.⁵²

Library employees worked to create aural and visual exhibits of Brazilian culture. To this end, the Music Library oversaw preservation of the folkloric recordings and ethnographic artifacts collected by the DC&R's ethnography society. The library's largest single acquisition came as a result of the 1938 folkloric mission throughout the states of the Brazilian Northeast, discussed in Chapter 4, in which scholars gathered over thirty hours of recorded music on more than a hundred acetate discs. The DC&R believed that making these discs available would provide artists inspiration and informative material to create nationalist music in the modernist tradition. Alvarenga wrote, "[The Music Library will] furnish our composers with a source permitting them, through the study of our folkloric music, to orient and ground their art in our national reality."⁵³

The Music Library also featured a tripartite set of recordings dubbed "Special Collections." The first included records of erudite music by local composers. The second set featured the "Spoken Word Archive" [*Arquivo da Palavra*]. This was a special

⁵² Andrade and Alvarenga, *Cartas*, 141-154.

⁵³ Alvarenga, *Discoteca Publica Municipal*, 9.

recording project carried out by the Division of Cultural Expansion with the help of philologist Antenor Nascentes and modernist poet Manuel Bandeira. The project recorded and classified the various accents of speakers from all parts of Brazil. From the recordings, the researchers separated Brazil into seven linguistic regions.⁵⁴ Finally, the special collections included the “Voices of Prestigious Men of the Nation” [*Vozes de homens ilustres nacionais*]. The effort invested into recording the voices of famous Brazilian men—and not women—suggests an interest in immortalizing Brazilian patrimony, to the extent that this patrimony was male and elite.

The “Special Collection” was theoretically innovative but, practically, served a minimal function in the city. Writer and educator Afrânio Peixoto captured the innovation and scholarly aspirations of the Discoteca after taking a tour of the place. He marveled at the concept: “A museum of music, of song, of the spoken word. University of Sound.”⁵⁵ The small spoken collection—amounting to less than an hour of recorded material—was indeed innovative, proposing that museums could be sonic instead of visual. Andrade himself had written of the “enormous and immediate necessity” of creating museums that were “modern,” “alive,” and featured “active education” that captured the attention of the public.⁵⁶ But this collection failed to do just that: capture the

⁵⁴ Alvarenga, *Discoteca Publica Municipal*, 9.

⁵⁵ “O Departamento de Cultura de S. Paulo,” *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio de Janeiro, Jan 1, 1937.

⁵⁶ “Outra coisa que me parece de enorme e immediata necessidade é a organização de museus. Mas, pelo amor de Deus museus a moderna, museus vivos, que sejam um ensinamento activo.” Mário de Andrade, “Departamento de Cultura,” *Diario Oficial*, 7 October, 1937.

public's attention. With the exception of a few linguists and esteemed visitors given a guided tour of the Music Library, few people ever listened to the recordings.⁵⁷

Finally, Cultural Expansion viewed the Music Library as a critical step facilitating the operation of the Department's (never-realized) *Radio Escola* (Radio School) radio station. To avoid the problem of mounting a radio station without sufficient material for round-the-clock broadcasting, the DC&R chose to first set up its requisite components. Cultural Expansion created the chamber music group with the understanding that they would later perform live broadcasts. Andrade made plans to microphone the Theatro Municipal in such a way that cultural events could be broadcast live, allowing audiences far larger than permitted by the theater's seating capacity.⁵⁸ The Music Library would provide the myriad recordings for periods without live performances. Even the Division of Social and Historic Documentation would contribute literary and scientific lectures.⁵⁹ Department leaders envisioned that, by 1938, the public radio station would be broadcasting symphonies throughout the whole city, accompanied by lectures on musical appreciation.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ The recordings, along with the rest of the Music Library contents, were forgotten until professor Carlos Augusto Calil became director of the Centro Cultural São Paulo, which held the collection, in 2000. His commitment to Mário de Andrade's legacy, along with his subsequent position as São Paulo's Secretary of Culture, allowed him to reorganize the collection, begin digitalization projects, and bring greater awareness Mário de Andrade's work as leader of the Department of Culture.

⁵⁸ Andrade's hopes to microphone the Theatro Municipal are clear from his highlights and marginalia of essays on microphoning theatres in Europe. *Le Menestral: Musique Theatres*, journal, "Radio Documentação." MA-MMA-103, Manuscritos, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

⁵⁹ "A radio-escola tem por fim por ao alcance de quem quer que seja, por meio de uma estação radio-difusora, palestras e cursos populares literarios ou scientificos, cursos de conferencias universitarias, enfim tudo o que possa contribuir para a expansão cultural." Fabio Prado, interview, in "Administração Municipal (Continuação)," *Estado de São Paulo*, March 5, 1936.

⁶⁰ "Administração Municipal (Continuação)," *Estado de São Paulo*, March 5, 1936.

Studying radio in 1930s Rio de Janeiro, Bryan McCann has noted the challenges of creating a station and keeping an audience.⁶¹ Round-the-clock broadcasting required a hefty budget capable of paying musicians, musical directors, conductors, technicians, and even government censors. Getulio Vargas, an adamant believer in the importance of radio, had worked with two federal government ministries to create public stations. He additionally decreed that the hour-long political and propaganda program *Hora do Brasil* (Brazil Hour) be aired on all stations six nights a week. But the federal ministries failed in both finances and programming. Stations were understaffed, censors gave up trying to pre-read scripts, and the lack of musicians resulted in repeated records and long periods of silence. Worse, few people listened. In the case of the nightly *Hora do Brasil*, so many homes turned off their transceivers that the show earned the nickname *Hora de falar sozinho* (The Hour of Speaking Alone).⁶²

A comparison with McCann's research suggests the DC&R was over-optimistic and under-educated in their proposal for the Radio School. Andrade himself was aware of the unpopularity of Rio's public broadcasting, stating that *Hora do Brasil* was a case of "abusive political propaganda, disoriented and artistically horrible." But Andrade's proposed alternative to political speeches was classical music mixed with historic and scientific lectures from local scholars; hardly the kind of programming that would have provoked public enthusiasm in a period in which commercial broadcasting of popular sambas, fox-trots, and marches captured listeners.

⁶¹ McCann, *Hello, Hello*.

⁶² McCann, *Hello, Hello*, ch 1.

Admittedly, Andrade had devised a plan to prevent listeners from clicking off their radios. He proposed stringing up loudspeakers in public plazas and gardens to force audiences to submit to the aural education program. Andrade further explained:

[The Radio School] will function in accordance with today's most formidable propaganda processes. A book is only read by those who want to read, in a library; concerts, archives, and playground are only entered by those wanting to enter. In contrast, radio via loudspeaker is heard by the willing and unwilling alike. In sum, it can be affirmed that the radio obligates people to listen to it.⁶³

In listing the forms of education available to the working-class citizen (library, concert, playground), Andrade intentionally named the central projects of the various divisions of his Department of Culture. Public radio, he thought, could trump each of these through its ability to impose itself on an audience. The radio would educate even those not wanting to listen.

While Brazil's two largest urban centers, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, both featured governments interested in using radio, their motivations differed. In Rio, the Vargas regime used public broadcasting in an attempt to extend the charisma of populist-style leadership to a national level by entering (through airwaves) the home. Vargas himself developed a relationship of reciprocity among the community of commercial music performers to keep the airwaves filled with songs exalting a Brazil bound with up with Vargism.⁶⁴ In São Paulo, however, the DC&R aspired to use radio as a process of

⁶³ "A Municipalidade, criou sabiamente, uma Radio Escola, que pelas suas próprias condições de funcionamento, é o mais formidável processo contemporâneo de propaganda. O livro, só lê quem quer ler, numa biblioteca, num concêrto, num arquivo, num parque infantil, so entra quem quer entrar. Ao passo que um radio falando, é escutado por quem quer, e insensivamente por quem não quer. Em última análise, poder-se-a mesmo afirmar que o radio obriga a gente a escuta-lo." Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, February 17, 1936. DC, caixa 6, AHSP.

⁶⁴ Although he does not focus on music, Milton Lahuerta explains how the Vargas state worked to conflate itself with the Brazilian nation in "Os Intelectuais e os anos 20: Moderno, modernista, modernização," in *A*

sonic socialization to improve the industrial work ethic, educate the masses, and improve social harmony. While the radio station never got off the ground, these same socializing goals pervaded the rest of the DC&R projects. This was clearest in the department's library and playground projects.

Libraries

Modernist writer and journalist Rubens Borba Alves de Moraes sat as head of the Division of Libraries. The DC&R work with libraries endowed the city with its first library system with multiple branches. During the three years under Moraes' management, the division increased book holdings, ran a course on library management, and created Brazil's first Library on Wheels program, providing working-class families with broader access to books, magazines, and newspapers. Similar to the Division of Cultural Expansion, the library pursued two types of interventions: one for elite scholars, and the other for the working-class community. Expanding scholarly holdings permitted a handful of researchers to better understand the nation's history. Programs such as Library on Wheels supplemented vocational education and aimed to provide workers a healthy and productive way to use their free time.

São Paulo received its first public library in 1926. By 1934, the year before the library integrated with the DC&R, the library had accrued 81,005 catalogued works (others remained uncatalogued in storage). Many of these were duplicate texts and multi-volume sets, leaving the library with a total of 27,461 distinct texts. In both books and

Década de 1920 e as origens do Brasil Moderno, ed. by Helena Carvalho de Lorenzao and Wilma Peres da Costa (São Paulo: Editora Unesp Fundação, 1997).

magazines, French and Portuguese competed as the dominant language. [see Figures 2.7 and 2.8].

Figure 2.7. Language of Books in São Paulo’s Central Library, 1934 ⁶⁵

- Spanish: 2,033
- Italian: 3,017
- Portuguese: 12,896
- French: 8,313
- Other languages: 1,202

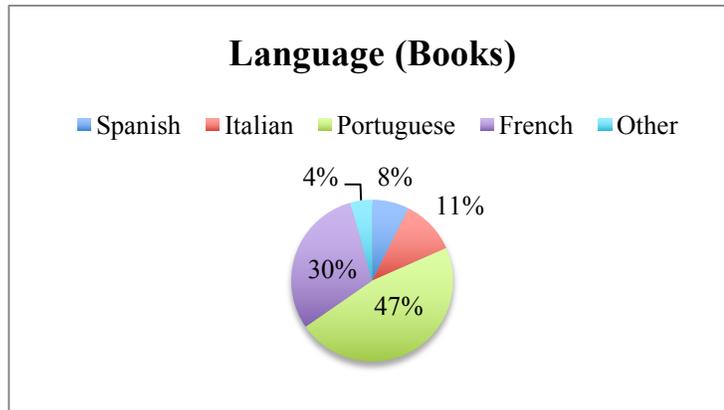
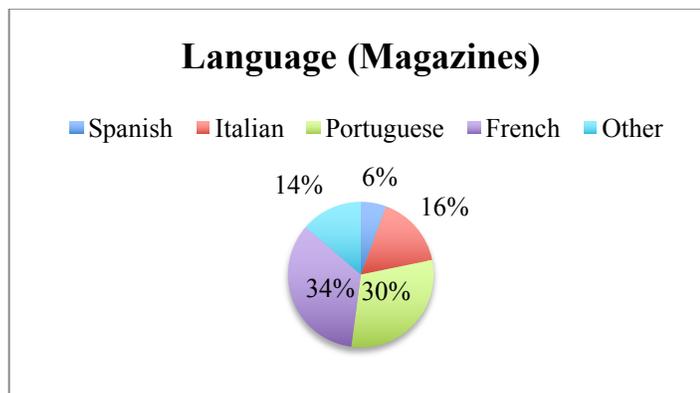


Figure 2.8. Language of Magazine Subscriptions in São Paulo’s Central Library, 1934.

- Spanish: 35
- Italian: 100
- Portuguese: 188
- French: 212
- Other: 85



⁶⁵ Charts created based on figures from the “Relatorio,” Eurico de Goes to Fabio Prado. January 6, 1936. DC, Caixa 77, AHSP

French featured predominantly in the magazine subscriptions and a close second in book holdings. In the early twentieth century, Brazilian elites considered French to be the language of scholarship. Culturally, longstanding intellectual links between the two countries made France a reference point for erudition.⁶⁶ Practically, Brazil lacked successful commercial printing presses until immigrants to São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro developed the industry in the early decades of the twentieth century.⁶⁷ With academic texts lacking translations in Portuguese, it made sense to purchase in French, the elite's second language. The high numbers of French books in the São Paulo library simply demonstrate that, before the DC&R, the public library invested heavily in furthering elite knowledge of Continental philosophy, science, and artistic trends. With the creation of the DC&R, the commitment to supporting research by elites would not change, but the language and nature of the library holdings would.⁶⁸

The Department of Culture expanded the library system, more than doubling its budget from 410 contos in 1934 to 955 contos in 1936.⁶⁹ Director Borba Alves de Moraes led the library in a rationalization program by teaching a class on Library science for

⁶⁶ For recent work on the intellectual relationship between France and Brazil, see Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, *Race in Translation: Culture Wars Around the Postcolonial Atlantic* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), ch 2,4. See also Jeffrey Needell, *A Tropical Belle Epoque: Elite Culture and Society in Turn-of-the-Century Rio de Janeiro* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁶⁷ Sérgio Miceli, *Intelectuais e classe dirigente no Brasil (1920-1945)* (São Paulo: Difel, 1979), especially the section "Editoras no Brasil." Also see Antonio Candido, "A literatura na evolução duma comunidade," in Antonio Candido, *Literatura e Sociedade* (Rio de Janeiro: Ouro sobre azul, 2011), 147-176.

⁶⁸ [A biblioteca] "possue manuaes ou livros de vulgarização popular, mas serve, principalmente, aos estudantes pobres das classes secundárias e superiores, além de assignar as melhores e mais variadas revistas technicas e mundanas." In "Relatorio," Eurico de Goes to Prefeito (Fabio Prado), January 6, 1936. DC, Caixa 77, AHSP.

⁶⁹ 1936 Proposed Budget, AHSP; 1938 Proposed Budget, AHSP.

employees of the local library and librarians at local academic institutions.⁷⁰ The central library extended its Saturday hours and began to open on Sunday afternoons in hopes of serving readers too busy during the week.⁷¹ The extended hours, in addition to the creation of the Library on Wheels and Children's Library resulted in library attendance almost doubling from just under six thousand visitors each month to over ten thousand readers each month in 1936.⁷² Many, if not most of these, were repeat visitors.

Holdings increased on two separate fronts. On one, new materials allowed for elite scholarship on "Brazilian things": history, culture, economy.⁷³ On the other, the division purchased vocational manuals, reference works, and children's stories to educate immigrants, laborers, and working-class children. The project facilitating elite scholarship turned away from the earlier habit of buying academic texts from France. Just as the modernist leaders of the 1920s had undertaken to "discover Brazil," here the Department invested in a literary project of self-discovery. The Department purchased two sizeable book collections containing rare books and manuscripts about Brazilian history. The collections were baptized "Brasilianas" (Brazilianates) to highlight their native content. The first was purchased in November 1935, from the estate of historian Albert Lamego, for 200 contos.⁷⁴ The collection held almost four-thousand texts

⁷⁰ Course notes can be found in MA-CUL-136 (through) MA-CUL-160, Departamento de Cultura, Documentação Profissional, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB. See also "Escola de biblioteconomia," *Diário da Noite* (São Paulo), August 1, 1936.

⁷¹ "Marcou um recorde brasileiro," *Diário da Noite* (São Paulo), February 1, 1937.

⁷² 1934 statistics come from "Relatorio," Eurico de Goes, AHSP. 1936 statistics from Paulo Duarte, "Departamento de Cultura," *Diário Oficial* (São Paulo), October 7, 1937; "Marcou um recorde brasileiro," *Diário da Noite* (São Paulo), February 1, 1937,

⁷³ The phrase "coisas brasileiras" is Paulo Duarte's, recorded in Duarte, *Mário por ele mesmo*, 50.

⁷⁴ "A 'Brasiliana' adquirida," *Diário da Noite* (São Paulo), November 8, 1935.

including primary-source letters related to the “Inconfidentes” plot, the failed colonial revolt that came to symbolize the struggle for national independence.⁷⁵ The Department leaders never suggested the historic letters symbolized an academic struggle for intellectual independence for Brazil. But the documents are representative of the types of manuscripts that São Paulo’s intellectual leaders were pleased to have.

The Department acquired the second *Brasiliana* in April 1936, purchased from the family of the historian Felix Pacheco, for 650 contos.⁷⁶ The Pacheco collection included almost eleven thousand works, including maps, manuscripts, and engravings. Newspapers suggested this was the second most-valuable such collection in all of Brazil, trailing only the rare works collection in Rio de Janeiro’s National Library.⁷⁷ The Pacheco collection included seventeenth-century Portuguese texts on navigation, and even a Bible transcribed in Venice dating from 1492.⁷⁸

While the DC&R believed all classes and social sectors needed to be familiar with the Brazilian past, the institution assumed not all were qualified to work in the *Brasilianas*. According to department leaders, the lower sectors needed works that were easier to digest. In an interview, Andrade explained the DC&R was concerned about “the lack of working-class books that can provide a coherent, synthetic vision of the country and state to its uncultured residents.”⁷⁹

⁷⁵ “A ‘*Brasiliana*’ adquirida,” *Diario da Noite* (São Paulo), November 8, 1935.

⁷⁶ “A segunda ‘*Brasiliana*’,” *Gazeta* (São Paulo), April 9, 1936.

⁷⁷ “Expansão Cultural,” *Estado de São Paulo*, May 1, 1936.

⁷⁸ “As precosidades [sic] da bibliotheca,” *O Jornal* (Rio de Janeiro), May 8, 1936.

⁷⁹ “O Departamento de Cultura...deparou um obstáculo...Quero me referir à falta de livros de feição popular que possam dar as pessoas de pouca cultura uma visão conjuncta e synthetica do paiz e do Estado em que vivem.” “Livros que descrevem o que é São Paulo,” *Diario da Noite* (São Paulo), February 8, 1936.

For this reason, the Division of Libraries sponsored multiple competitions for scholars to write accessible syntheses of Brazilian history. One synthesis ought to deal with São Paulo state, and the second on Brazil, both “designed for the popular masses of little instruction” and containing all the “essentials” about the state and nation.⁸⁰ Other contests asked scholars to write biographies immortalizing important figures of São Paulo history. Andrade highlighted the importance of these syntheses, explaining, “The immigrants [in São Paulo] know almost nothing of our past, traditions, and our way of being.” It was “necessary to incorporate these people into the national entity, so that they participate in it and not just exclusively in their private interests.”⁸¹

To take books to the masses, the Division of Libraries established the *Biblioteca Circulante*, or Library on Wheels program. In October 1935, a manager from São Paulo Ford assembly factory donated a V8 van for the task. The brand of the car is significant when considering that the project of taking books to the masses itself had ideological connections to the Fordist program of redirecting how workers used their free time.⁸² After receiving the van, the Division of Libraries purchased book and magazines for the mobile library and launched the program in February of 1936. In the first month, the

⁸⁰ “livro sobre o Brasil e de outro sobre São Paulo destinado às massas populares de escassa instrução, contendo tudo quanto se deva saber de essencial sobre o País e sobre o Estado.” Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, October 15, 1935. DC, caixa 18, AHSP.

⁸¹ “Esses imigrantes quasi [sic] tudo ignoram sobre a nossa historia, tradições e natureza... Fez-se necessario incorporar esses homens à entidade nacional, para que participem della e não exclusivamente dos seus interesses pessoais.” “Livros que descrevem o que é São Paulo,” *Diario da Noite* (São Paulo), February 8, 1936.

⁸² The gift was announced in “Bibliotheca Ambulante para São Paulo,” *Diario de Noite* (São Paulo), October 30, 1935. The reporter wrote that the Ford plant, “gentilmente, querendo colaborar com a Municipalidade, offereceu [sic] a ‘carroceria’ por intermedio de sua gerencia.”

program served 1200 readers, including repeat visitors. The readership rate grew steadily to almost three thousand a month by July of 1936.⁸³

Figure 2.9. Library on Wheels Ford V8 Van

Collection Mário de Andrade, IEB, Public Domain



The mobile library targeted working-class readers and their children. Library director Moraes bragged the project was successfully serving “the people’s people, uncollared, poor children, barefoot kids.” But rather than driving through impoverished neighborhoods to distribute books, the van drove parked each day in either the *Praça da República* (Plaza of the Republica) or to the *Jardim da Luz* (Light Garden) park in front of the municipal train station.⁸⁴ The park served as a strategic point for various DC&R projects because of its location. The train station across the street served as a congregation point for workers coming on and off shifts. Outside the train station lay the

⁸³ “A Bibliotheca Circulante do Departamento de Cultura já possui,” *Folha da Noite* (São Paulo), August 5, 1936.

⁸⁴ The Library on Wheels originally spent eight consecutive days in each plaza before moving to the next but, upon popular request, began alternating days between the two plazas. “Bibliothecas Circulantes,” *Estado de São Paulo*, February 18, 1936; “A Bibliotheca Circulante” *Folha da Noite* (São Paulo), August 5, 1936.

neighborhood *Bom Retiro*, or “Good Retreat,” named because it housed so many recent immigrant arrivals. The park thus served as a recreational space for the department’s twin target populations.

The contents and policies of the Library on Wheels collection clarify the class distinctions separating this project with that of the “*Brasiliana*” collections. The portable library held children’s books, an encyclopedia set, and didactic material on vocational topics such as carpentry and machine operations. The collection also included magazines and newspapers.⁸⁵ While the Library on Wheels collection contained near nine-hundred volumes, only one hundred of these were available for check-out. The rest had to be read at the plazas and returned on the same day.⁸⁶ When documents were returned, they were “daily disinfected through a modern process,” as if working-class hands posed more of a threat to books and the larger reading community than the hands perusing volumes at the public library.⁸⁷

In a discussion on the achievements of the Library on Wheels program, library director Moraes broke the DC&R’s customary silence about São Paulo’s black population. He exclaimed that a “black man spent a long time with a grammar book on his knees, taking notes on a piece of paper!” The statement suggests that what surprised Moraes about the black man was his hunger for literacy. Historian Jerry Dávila has shown that in 1930s Brazil public-school systems believed educating black children

⁸⁵ Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, November 13, 1935. DC, caixa 70, AHSP.

⁸⁶ “*Bibliotheca Ambulante para São Paulo*,” *Diario de Noite* (São Paulo), October 30, 1935.

⁸⁷ “*Incentivando a leitura entre o povo*,” *Folha da Noite* (São Paulo), October 20, 1935; “*Ja está funcionando*,” *Diario da Noite* (São Paulo), February 17, 1936.

necessitated “cultural whitening” through the teaching of manners, hygiene, and habits.⁸⁸ Indeed, many of the education reformers in Rio were colleagues and friends of the leaders of the DC&R. Moraes’ comment is indicative that the São Paulo leaders shared the attitudes of those in Rio. Discourses of blacks as averse to education helped naturalize government education projects that did not engage black communities. What is more, the exclusion of blacks from musical and educational projects serving as industrial reform suggests that the DC&R leaders did not consider blacks as laborers to be reformed—they shared the same preference for European labor as the São Paulo industrialists of the previous two generations.

The Division of Libraries then constructed a Children’s Library for São Paulo’s middling and elite sectors.⁸⁹ The location of the library, a short walk from downtown, made it feasible for parents to drop off children to run errands or go to work.⁹⁰ The main area featured a collection of more than 1,400 volumes. A second room featured board games, coins, maps, puzzles, and stamps. Finally, the library had a theater room, allowing students to watch educational films.⁹¹

The material provisions at the Children’s Library contrast with those available through the Library on Wheels program. While the Children’s Library served a considerably smaller population than the Ford V8, the elite’s young benefited from 1,400

⁸⁸ Jerry Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness: Race and Social Policy in Brazil, 1917-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

⁸⁹ The class makeup of those frequenting the Children’s Library was explicitly stated by Mário de Andrade in information about one of the DC&R contests: “Concorrentes: crianças operárias dos Parques Infantis, e crianças no geral burgueses da Biblioteca Infantil.” In “Curso de filosofia e historia da arte,” MA-MMA-037, Manuscritos, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

⁹⁰ The children’s library was located on the street Major Sertorio, on the same block where a newer children’s library still operates today.

⁹¹ “Inauguradas as instalações da Bibliotheca Infantil,” *Folha da Noite* (São Paulo), April 14, 1936.

texts to the 900 available to the adults at the Jardim da Luz. The construction of a movie theater within the library is especially indicative of a financial disparity in library investment. Finally, teachers at the library engaged students in a literacy development program that neither workers nor lower-class children enjoyed. After reading a book, students at the Children's Library filled out a form or verbally answered questions geared towards increasing reading comprehension, such as: "Can you summarize the book topic? What did you think of the book? Is this a true story or fiction? Which character made the biggest impression on you and why?"⁹² The questions and education program suggests these students were being groomed for critical thinking and higher education.

In sum, the DC&R's library division enacted a bifurcated education project. The division invested extensively in holdings for a select group of elite scholars: in 1936 they spent 850 contos on the *Brasilianas*, overspending the original budget (322 contos) earmarked for library acquisitions.⁹³ As this was the budget intended for all library interventions, the working classes saw only a small percentage of the library funds. The elite collections were valued by the DC&R not only to the extent that they allowed São Paulo to act as guardian of national patrimony but also in that they permitted local scholars to shape the national past to match modernist, local, and industrial agendas. In their work with the popular classes, the division encouraged workers to spend free time reading magazines, encyclopedias, and vocational material. The decision to differentiate education according to class was reproduced for the children. Whereas middling and elite children benefited from generous resources and literacy training, immigrant and working-

⁹² "Visitando as instalações," *Diario da Noite* (São Paulo), February 13, 1936.

⁹³ 1936 Budget Proposal, AHSP.

class children received a very different socialization project, implemented through public playgrounds.

Playgrounds

The Division of Education and Recreation (henceforth Division of Ed/Rec) created a public playground project that adapted the larger DC&R's strategies to engage the city's working-class and immigrant children. This young population served as the next generation's working class, and government leaders were serious about sowing in the areas of worker health, teach healthy living, and musical training at a young age in order to reap social harmony in the coming years. They began with attention to medical care and psychological monitoring. Next, the projects taught students to accept social hierarchies as natural and helpful. Finally, the playgrounds included a project of music education. Teaching music instead of literacy engendered the assumption that the masses reacted best to "passive" forms of education even as it raised another generation of workers lacking critical literacy. Finally, the playgrounds taught students to sing Brazilian folkloric songs in unison. This, in theory, would help young immigrants adopt the "national psychology" while preparing the city's next generation of industrial workers to embrace a social harmony devoid of class conflict.

Brazilian intellectuals and educators had studied the recent North American and European pushes for kindergartens and public playgrounds. Division director Nicanor Miranda had read extensively on education before coming on staff at the DC&R. He accepted that children needed a place to play, exercise, and practice social interaction. Books such as Stanley Hall's *Adolescence, Its Psychological Relation to Physiology*,

Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education, William Dewey's *Interest and Effort in Education* and José Mallart's *La educación activa* impressed upon Miranda the idea that successful education needed to be outdoor, social, and active.⁹⁴ São Paulo city engaged this educational program through their "Parques Infantis" (Childhood Parks) program, Miranda's translation of the English term "playground."⁹⁵

Already by the end of 1935, the division had three parks up and running.⁹⁶ Maria Aparecida Duarte, sister of cabinet advisor Paulo Duarte, served as head instructor. The Division of Ed/Rec additionally hired a doctor, dentist, six playground teachers, three substitutes, and twenty-two monitors to run the parks.⁹⁷ The 6:22 ratio of educators to monitors certainly contrasts with the full teaching staff at the Children's Library. It also corroborates that the division saw the playground project as social and physical conditioning of future laborers more than a project of intellectual development.

Each playground targeted working-class and immigrant children between the ages of three and twelve, although records reveal teenagers also participated in the program.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ On Miranda's engagement with these authors and others, see Nicanor Miranda, "Atividade gímnica e atividade lúdica," *Revista do Arquivo Municipal*, 128, São Paulo, 1941; Nicanor Miranda to Mário de Andrade, correspondence, 1937. MA-C-CPMVA5151, Correspondência, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

⁹⁵ Legislation, February 1, 1935. DC, caixa 78, AHSP. Nicanor Miranda authored the proposal, suggesting "Parques Infantis" to be his translation of the English "Playground."

⁹⁶ Nicanor Miranda to Mário de Andrade, correspondence, December 23, 1935. DC, caixa 71, AHSP.

⁹⁷ Initially, the parks employed administrator Maria A. Junqueira Duarte, head medic Rubens Cordeiro Leite, six teachers (Elza de Moraes Barros, Suzana de Abreu Sampaio, Ide Jordão Juester, Margarida Gonçalves Dente, Lavínia da Costa Vilela, and Sara Ramos), and three substitutes. See Legislation, Ato 862, May 30, 1935. DC, caixa 78; AHSP and Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, October 15, 1935. DC, caixa 18, AHSP. The city passed a law in late 1937 augmenting the number of teaching positions to twenty-five instructors and eight health supervisors. See Legislation, Lei 3.662, Oct 30, 1937, DC, caixa 78, AHSP.

⁹⁸ The maximum age limit of twelve years was mentioned by Paulo Duarte, "Departamento de Cultura," *Diário Oficial* (São Paulo), October 7, 1937. The presence of 14 year-old teens actively participating in playgrounds is registered in the Mário de Andrade's personal notes: MA-MMA-37-553, Manuscritos, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

The Ipiranga students played in the Praça Nami Jaffet (named after a successful Lebanese immigrant and businessman) in the industrial district of Ipiranga, which hosted a working-class population. The Lapa playground was stationed in the “Largo de Lapa” (Lapa Plaza) in the center of the meat-packing neighborhood of the same name, which employed a diverse community of immigrants. The Pedro II playground was located in Parque Pedro II, sitting on the eastern border of Brás. Also an industrial district, Brás employed the Italian, Greek, and Armenian immigrants that heavily populated the neighborhood.⁹⁹

The Department constructed a fourth park, Santo Amaro, in 1937-8. Three more parks were in the budget plans for 1938 but not constructed.¹⁰⁰ Architectural plans for the Santo Amaro location reveal the parks featured outdoor recreational space along with an actual building featuring bathrooms, classroom spaces, and a covered gymnasium.¹⁰¹ By the time 1938 came to a close, 6,526 of São Paulo’s youth had visited one of the parks. Daily attendance of the combined parks averaged just under a thousand students.¹⁰²

Students brought a substantial amount of physical health problems to the playgrounds. Most common were chicken pox, measles, tonsillitis, scabies, and pink eye.

⁹⁹ Ana Lucia Goulart de Faria wrote a dissertation on the public playgrounds. Her work includes helpful annexes confirming that the vast majority of park attendees were children or grandchildren of immigrants. Ana Lucia Goulart de Faria, “Direito à Infância: Mário de Andrade e os Parques Infantis para as crianças de família operária na cidade de São Paulo (1935-1938)” (PhD diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 1993). Faria’s work marvels at Andrade’s insights in childhood education since he read little on the subject. She misses that it was not Andrade, but rather Division of Ed/Rec director Miranda that had read extensively on childhood education and directed the activities at the local playgrounds.

¹⁰⁰ 1938 Proposed Budget, AHSP.

¹⁰¹ “Parque Infantil Santo Amaro,” DC, caixa 74, AHSP. A newspaper report confirms each of the other parks also had an outdoor recreational field, classrooms, an infirmary, bathrooms, and an indoor gymnasium. “Organização que honra São Paulo,” *Voz de Portugal* (Rio de Janeiro), February 14, 1937.

¹⁰² Student inscription numbers come from Nicanor Miranda’s reports in the *Revista do Arquivo Municipal*, reprinted in Ana Goulart de Faria, “Direito à Infância.”

The parks also registered cases of diphtheria, syphilis, and scarlet fever. The leaders of the parks further noticed widespread malnutrition among the students.¹⁰³

The park leaders responded through medical care. They instituted a snack program to combat malnutrition, providing each student with a daily glass of milk and two bread-and-jelly sandwiches. By 1938, the Department served an average of 20,431 snacks each month, meaning they were served roughly 930 students each day.¹⁰⁴ A doctor treated students on a circuit, providing health examinations and administering a chicken pox vaccine. A dentist saw students with toothaches or other dental problems, treating 434 students throughout the course of 1938.¹⁰⁵

The Division of Ed/Rec did not draw a clear line between physical and mental health. Playground monitors and nurses concerned themselves with both physical and mental well-being. In addition to helping with falls and scrapes, nurses took notes on children's behavior, which mayor Prado explained as important for "diagnoses both psychological and pathological."¹⁰⁶ In taking behavioral notes, nurses monitored children's social interaction while looking for any psychological development deemed potentially dangerous.

Children were psychologically monitored through "biotype index cards" [fichas biotipologicas]. To attend a park, each student had to register and undergo a physical

¹⁰³ Goulart de Faria, "Direito a infancia," 89.

¹⁰⁴ The 1938 Division of Ed/Rec medical charts and snack statistics come from Goulart de Faria, "Direito à Infância." To find the daily number of snacks served, I calculated the monthly average, then divided this by the average number of weekdays in a given month.

¹⁰⁵ Statistics on injections, vaccinations, and dentist work for 1936 and 1937 can be found in Paulo Duarte's report, "Departamento de Cultura," *Diario Oficial* (São Paulo) October 7, 1937. Data for 1938 is compiled in the annexes of Goulart de Faria, "Direito a infancia."

¹⁰⁶ "Administração Municipal," *Estado de São Paulo*, March 3, 1936.

examination. The park instructors made two cards for each student: a membership card and the biotype index. On these second cards—in the words of mayor Prado—
“instructors noted everything necessary for the exact definition of the child’s psychology.”¹⁰⁷ The decision to use physical characteristics to make psychological assertions about playground participants is reminiscent not just of the applied psychology promoted by São Paulo’s industrial reformers, but also of the Lombrosian criminal psychology used in race and criminal scholarship in turn-of-the-century Brazil.¹⁰⁸

Psychological analysis also occurred collectively. The playgrounds created a newspaper pastiche project for students. Working together, the children used newspaper clippings to paste together their own daily newspaper, a hodgepodge of the reports and editorials that most stood out to them. In an interview, Mayor Prado commented that the newspapers could be read to understand the predominating nationalities present in each park. But the mayor’s superficial analysis was stereotypical if not outrightly racist. Analysis of the newspaper made by the Lapa playground students (featuring a heavy Italian demographic) had revealed “children with the most artistic and musical tendencies.”¹⁰⁹ Referring to the Pedro II park—situated in a neighborhood with many Eastern-European construction workers—Prado suggested the children abandoned the daily newspaper project, preferring instead to make “bridges with sticks, models of bamboo.” The journalist interviewing Prado intervened, asking if he should thus expect to

¹⁰⁷ “Administração Municipal,” *Estado de São Paulo*, March 3, 1936.

¹⁰⁸ Regarding the applied psychology advocated by industrial reformers, see Weinstein, *For Social Peace*. On Lombrosian criminal psychology in Brazil, see Skidmore, *Black Into White*. For its presence in Latin America more broadly, see Ricardo Salvatore and Carlos Aguirre, ed. *The Birth of the Penitentiary in Latin America: Essays on Criminology, Prison Reform, and Social Control, 1830-1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996).

¹⁰⁹ “Administração Municipal,” *Estado de São Paulo*, March 3, 1936.

see article clippings about banking and finance from the children in Bom Retiro (the immigrant neighborhood with a heavy Jewish population). Prado replied, “And even communists!” The journalist noted that Prado made the comment with a smile, as if the racial slur ought be taken lightly. While it is possible that the mayor did not take the newspaper project too seriously, medical instructors and playground teachers were committed enough to collect the papers every day. They even sent samples of the student projects to neighboring countries.¹¹⁰ Cabinet advisor Paulo Duarte seemed to believe the newspapers to hold psychological information ripe for analysis, saying that each park saved, “without a single edit or correction, the fantasies and drawings, precious documents for the study of the childhood psychology of the Paulista youth.”¹¹¹ Duarte’s comment that the teachers made no corrections to the newspapers is significant. If the project were primarily centered on developing literacy, instructors would have worked with students to fix spelling errors and organization problems. But a Freudian project of psychoanalysis would not permit such corrections: the father of psychoanalysis believed errors to be symptoms that allowed for a diagnosis of unconscious desires.

Andrade, too, believed playground art could provide significant psychological insight. In July 1938, Andrade held a contest at the playgrounds for the best drawings. He then used the entries for his own psychological analysis. The analysis turned into a lecture that Andrade subsequently gave at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. In the lecture, he compared childhood notions of aesthetics to those held among primitive

¹¹⁰ Copies of the newspapers had been sent to the leaders of the Parque Rodó in Montevideo, Uruguay. “Administração Municipal,” *Estado de São Paulo*, March 3, 1936.

¹¹¹ “Departamento de Cultura,” *Diario Oficial* (São Paulo), October 7, 1937.

populations.¹¹² In general, Andrade concluded that childhood and primitive aesthetics were comparable to the extent that they both served a educational and social purposes—one of the notions that had drawn Andrade to primitive art in the first place. Children drew pictures not as an “empty game” [jogo desinteressado] but rather as “essential learning” to make sense of their surroundings. As a project “only completed with a narrative,” Andrade suggested drawing pictures prepared students for social interaction. He further argued that both children and primitives felt compelled towards the arts, but did so without the careful contemplation that civilized artists were capable of realizing. Then—nuancing the rest of the lecture’s generalizations of childhood psychology—Andrade suggested that factors of class influenced a child’s level of psychological development and creativity. In a memorable example, Andrade noted that only students from the Children’s Library had drawn pictures with their paper in the vertical (portrait) position. All the public playground paintings featured landscape orientation. Since the Children’s Library had a bourgeois demographic contrasting with the proletariat composition of the public playgrounds, Andrade decided upper-class children had a greater “freedom of invention for creation,” while poor children were committed to sketching linear stories because they were more in tune with the “rhythmic development of time.”¹¹³ These types of conclusions reveal that Andrade, however creatively, was searching for proofs corroborating *a priori* convictions about art and psychology.

¹¹² Mário de Andrade, “Curso de Filosofia e História da Arte: Das Origens da Arte: A Criança,” Lecture. MA-MMA-037, Manuscritos, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

¹¹³ “pois busca a horizontalidade, a que, na linguagem e no conto, corresponde ao desenvolvimento rítmico no tempo. Por outro lado a ocorrência bem mais frequente do papel verticalizado na Bibliotheca, de criança mais contagiadas e estimuladas, demonstra nestas maior liberdade de invenção de criação.” Andrade, “Origens da Arte: A Criança,” IEB.

Primitivism was critical for the social role it played in the community, but civilized reflection was necessary for quality aesthetics. The lower classes were characterized by a natural responsiveness to rhythm while, already in adolescence, bourgeois children could trump rhythmic instincts with a higher capacity for creativity and invention. The program of the public parks, however, was less about collecting data for psychological studies, and more about developing students psychologically and musically.

The parks aimed to reform the behavior and psychology of the working-class children. Cabinet advisor Paulo Duarte explained that, “the child, in spite of his low social standing, ought find in the playground all the conditions favoring the remodeling of his conduct.” This meant “acquiring habits of order, sobriety, hygiene, happiness, [and] obedience”—the key components of Fordist reform.¹¹⁴ Andrade saw the parks as primarily engaging in a psychological intervention. This was “work done with the intention of giving a truly social organization to the children, a truly social conception of life.”¹¹⁵ Working, playing, and especially singing together would “reorganize the excessive individualism in our Brazilian psychology.”¹¹⁶

The parks explicitly aimed to teach hierarchies and work ethic. Mayor Fabio Prado explained that when students came to the playground, they were organized into clubs as a way to realize “moral education” through “indirect means.” The clubs were

¹¹⁴ “A criança, embora de meio baixo, deve encontrar no parque todas as condições que favorecem a remodelação de sua conducta, em qualquer aspecto da vida: o modo de comportar-se a mesa, adquirindo hábitos de ordem, sobriedade, higiene, alegria, obediência, etc...” “Departamento de Cultura,” *Diário Oficial* (São Paulo), October 7, 1937.

¹¹⁵ “trabalho feito na intenção de dar às crianças uma organização verdadeiramente social, um verdadeiro conceito social da vida,” “Novo e Fecundo,” *Diário da Noite* (São Paulo), May 31, 1935.

¹¹⁶ “reorganize o individualismo excessivo da nossa psychologia brasileira.” “Novo e Fecundo,” *Diário da Noite* (São Paulo), May 31, 1935.

“organized, directed, and conducted almost exclusively by children.” This had the advantage of teaching them “self-government.”¹¹⁷ Yet a comment by Division of Ed/Rec director Nicanor Miranda hinted that this “self-government” project may not have been egalitarian: children chose their “directors” and “captains” and then, “in cases of conflict, judge[d] their own companions.”¹¹⁸ The playground’s goal of social conditioning children for labor was succinctly put by in another comment from Miranda: “in the Playground, the children also ‘work.’”¹¹⁹

The final goal of the children’s parks was to instill Brazilian cultural tradition. The very legislation founding the department encouraged supervisors to encourage the children to play local games so as not to lose tradition: “It is the responsibility of the instructor...to help students maintain their practice of national games and sports. These are traditions that children may have already forgotten or at least tend to forget on a daily basis.”¹²⁰ For children of recent immigrants, of course, forgetting Brazilian tunes was not the issue; they needed to learn such tunes in the first place. The Department worked towards this in multiple ways.

First, the Department hired a musical director to teach music lessons at the local parks. Martin Braunweiser seemed an odd candidate to teach Brazilian musical culture to children, since he himself was an Austrian immigrant. But Braunweiser was a teacher in

¹¹⁷ “Clubes de crianças... organizados, dirigidos e conduzidos, quasi exclusivamente pelas crianças, lhes incute suasoriamente a idéia de auto-governo da qual os pequenos se tornam os mais fervorosos adeptos.” In “Administração Municipal,” *Estado de São Paulo*, March 3, 1936.

¹¹⁸ “elegem os seus directores, os seus capitães...e que nós casos de conflito, julgam os seus próprios companheiros.” “Organização que honra São Paulo,” *Voz de Portugal* (Rio de Janeiro), February 14, 1937.

¹¹⁹ “Mas no Parque, as crianças, também ‘trabalham’.” “Organização que honra São Paulo,” *Voz de Portugal* (Rio de Janeiro), February 14, 1937.

¹²⁰ “compete ao instrutor...propagar a pratica de brinquedos e jogos nacionais, cuja tradição as crianças já perderam ou tendem dia a dia a perder.” Ato 861, artigo 49. May 30, 1935, AHSP.

whom Andrade placed confidence; the Austrian also directed the DC&R elite choir, the Coral Paulistano. In addition, Braunweiser had knowledge of Brazilian folklore, having collected folkloric tunes from São Paulo's interior to assist in Andrade's musical ethnography projects.¹²¹ The department leaders may have thought that an immigrant familiar with Brazilian folkloric music would serve as a great role model for the young park attendees. It is also likely that Braunweiser's European musical training was viewed approvingly as a stamp of sophistication and sure sign of musical accomplishment.

The students practiced singing and dancing for annual performances. The 1938 annual report of the Division of Ed/Rec shows a wide variety of Brazilian folkloric genres represented in the five performances throughout the year: *ranchera*, *foxtrot*, *cateretê paulista*, *quadrilha*, *valsa*, *bailado*. Some students even performed a *sainete*, or musical comedy, and others sang songs from the acclaimed nineteenth-century Brazilian opera *O Guarani*.¹²²

Preparations for the largest musical performance began in February 1936, when Andrade ordered sailor costumes for children and paid a carpentry company to build a portable caravel (a Portuguese sailing ship from the era of maritime exploration), some eight feet long.¹²³ In his earlier ethnographic and musicological research in the Northeastern states of Brazil, Andrade had been fascinated by a dramatic dance reenacting the departure of Portuguese sailors from their coastal hometowns and the

¹²¹ For Braunweiser's collection of *Bumba meu boi* tunes in São Paulo's interior, see Mário de Andrade, *Danças Dramáticas do Brasil* (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia Limitada, 1982), 29-34.

¹²² The list of performances is reproduced in Ana Lucia Goulart de Faria, "Direito à Infância," ch 5.

¹²³ Receipt, February 27, 1936. DC, caixa 70, AHSP. Anselmo Cerello & Cia, receipt, January 9, 1936. DC, caixa 70, AHSP. Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, correspondence, October 16, 1935. DC, caixa 70, AHSP.

challenges they faced on the high seas. Andrade transcribed many of the “Marujada” tunes (“Marujos” meaning sailor) and decided to reenact the dramatic dance on the São Paulo playgrounds.

The students spent three years rehearsing the piece, and then performed it on special occasions, including the national conference examined in Chapter 5. Playground teachers and musical directors taught the students the steps and words to more than a dozen songs. The ethnographic songs were then arranged to be sung by the children. To draw clearer connections between various stages in the maritime drama, modernist poets Manuel Bandeira, Menotti del Picchia, and Jorge de Lima wrote lyrics to three additional songs inserted into the suite.¹²⁴

The DC&R taught children the folkloric pieces with multiple goals in mind: to keep Brazilian tradition alive, improve the physical health of children through gymnastic recreation, and create psychological unity among the students by having them sing together. Symptomatic of the group’s notion that history was being resurrected rather than invented, they billed the ballet a “children’s reconstitution” [reconstituição infantil] rather than a play. Toward this end, the department explained it had kept the melodies exactly the same as those registered in ethnographic accounts. By “not modifying a single sound in the songs,” the DC&R could claim the ballet conserved the songs’ “complete reality.”¹²⁵ Apparently, the leaders saw no contradiction between conserving the traditional melodies, on the one hand, and adding new tunes by modernist poets, on the other.

¹²⁴ *Anais*, 726; “Inaugurar-se-á amanhã,” *Folha de Manhã* (São Paulo), July 6, 1937.

¹²⁵ “Nas músicas não modificamos um som sequer, conservando-as em toda a sua realidade.” *Anais*, 725.

Figure 2.10. The “Marujada” at the Dom Pedro II Public Playground (1)
Collection Mário de Andrade, IEB, Public Domain



Figure 2.11. The “Marujada” at the Dom Pedro II Public Playground (2)
Collection Mário de Andrade, IEB, Public Domain



Park director Nicanor Miranda explained that, rather than being a “product of the individual,” folkloric dances “evolved through time as an unconscious form of the life of the community.” As such they were an “accumulated expression of all eras.”¹²⁶ While DC&R publications explained that the choreographies were designed to suit a “gymnastic

¹²⁶ Nicanor Miranda, *Organização das atividades da recreação* (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia, 1984), 45.

purpose,” Miranda himself expressed that the dances served both “corporal and psychological affirmation of the given collective body.”¹²⁷ Social harmony would follow, as singing together “turned the individual into a cooperator in society.”¹²⁸

Department leaders considered music a powerful tool to direct an individual’s thoughts and actions. Folkloric music, in particular, was believed connected to the nation’s unconscious. Teaching the songs and dances to the youth, then, not only unified the community, but also passed on the nation’s psychology to the next generations.

In sum, the playground projects had multiple goals, starting with the desire to monitor working-class children’s physical and psychological health. Playground educators treated physical health with a snack program, vaccinations, and dental care. They studied mental health by mixing ideas and tests from criminology, applied psychology, and psychoanalysis. The Division of Ed/Rec then employed games, tasks, and hierarchical clubs with the objective of preparing students for cooperation and obedience in the work force. Finally, the Department used music to teach children Brazilian cultural traditions. They believed singing together would help the immigrant children assimilate more quickly to Brazil’s national psychology.

Conclusions

Each DC&R project operated from similar assumptions about state and society. First, the Department believed in the need to guide the masses through cultural paternalism. Music selections were to be chosen by educated, erudite elites to train

¹²⁷ “São a afirmação plástica e psicológica de determinada coletividade.” Miranda, *Organização*, 45.

¹²⁸ Miranda, *Organização*, 45.

listeners' ears away from Italian opera and towards national music. Music contests would not only be judged by an elite jury, but also be structured in accordance with pre-written themes and requirements. Books needed to be made accessible to the working classes, but workers were not trustworthy enough to take volumes home for the week. Texts further needed disinfecting upon being returned to the Library on Wheels. Andrade wanted to spread musical literacy to all social classes, and worked rigorously to make music accessible to urban laborers with little disposable income. The cultural institution committed to governing not only how culture was produced but also consumed.

While paternal attitudes had shaped the behavior of the Brazilian state for years, the other central assumption of the Department was relatively new: that the state could make a psychological intervention in the community, and that such an intervention was important for the health of the individual and the community.¹²⁹ The directors of the public playgrounds saw addressing psychological health as equally important as addressing the physical problems of malnutrition or chicken pox. Local librarians worked with children on mental development through reading comprehension questions. At the children's libraries and public playgrounds alike, the daily children's paper helped workers monitor for potential psychological abnormalities or concerns.

The belief that music unified communities, and the further notion that the Brazilian people were uniquely positioned to respond to socialization through sound, had been slowly developed by Mário de Andrade in the 1920s-30s. Even before the creation of the DC&R, Mário de Andrade had been exploring these ideas within the framework of

¹²⁹ On paternalism in Brazilian politics, see Robert Levine, *Father of the Poor? Vargas and His Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Richard Graham, *Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

the social sciences. Returning to Andrade's intellectual journey further clarifies the intellectual framework behind the DC&R, which would have serious consequences on the way the institution's scholars approached their ethnographic research.

CHAPTER III

Towards a Theory of National Psychology: Mário de Andrade and Modernist Ethnography

Introduction

In early 1935, Mário de Andrade received the invitation to participate in the leadership team of São Paulo's DC&R. Mayor Fabio Prado and his Cabinet advisor Paulo Duarte had first requested that Andrade direct the division of Cultural Expansion, but soon after asked him to run the entire department. Andrade accepted and stepped into his new role at the institution's inauguration in June 1935.¹ In it, he found the resources and support necessary to transform his personal work on national identity and artistic creation into an institutional project. Two of his early acts made this possible. First, Andrade created a local music library (*Discoteca Municipal*) to store not only sheet music for the city's music groups, but also the ethnographic artifacts and data to be collected over the next years. Second, he organized an ethnography course taught by Dina Levi-Strauss, then the wife of a young anthropologist named Claude Levi-Strauss. Upon conclusion of the course, the students became inaugural members of São Paulo's "Society of Ethnography and Folklore," the group through which the DC&R continued to fund ethnographic projects throughout the country.²

¹ Andrade and Alvarenga. *Cartas*, 118.

² In the majority of cases, the DC provided ethnographic funding and support only to students that had taken the ethnography course. The obvious exception is the financial support of Claude and Dina Levi-Strauss ethnographic trips. See the documents regarding a film-project and trip to Mato Grosso: November 7, 1935, DC, caixa 70, AHSP. March 19, 1936, DC, caixa 73, AHSP. April 11, 1938, DC, caixa 78, AHSP. See also "Noticiario: Expedição Levi-Strauss," newspaper clipping #348, SEF microfilm, Mediateca Oneyda Alvarenga, Centro Cultural São Paulo (hereafter CCSP).

More than fifty students enrolled in the ethnography course. Most of these were either acquaintances of department leaders or young adults from São Paulo's elite families. The course lasted just over twenty weeks and came with the responsibility of conducting a research project. The ethnography students enjoyed the additional incentive of having their work published in the *Revista do Arquivo Municipal* (Journal of the Municipal Archive). Coming into the department, Andrade had been given charge over the city's archives. He regularized the production of their sporadically published journal and shifted its content to focus on ethnography and local debates about the social sciences. Students were then able to publish their research in the journal.

For their ethnographic projects, only a few students followed the guidance of Dina Levi-Strauss. The French professor preferred physical over cultural anthropology and encouraged students to work with Amerindian anthropometrics or go to local maternity wards to count "manchas mongólicas," (Mongolian birthmarks) which supposedly corroborated a theory that Amerindians had Asian ancestry.³ But most students instead undertook projects that, on first glance, appeared completely unrelated to each other. They recorded religious music, sent out surveys on food prohibitions, and made lists of animals mentioned in proverbial phrases. A facile judgment would suggest the DC&R yielded to young scholars preferring arbitrary research projects to physical anthropology. The story of their choices, though, is much more intriguing and understudied.

³ *Apostilhas* (lecture notes) from ethnography course weeks 2-3, SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP. *Boletim 2 of Boletim da Sociedade de Etnografia e Folclore nos 1 a 6*, São Paulo, October 1, 1937 to March 1, 1938, SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP. Lecture notes suggest students asked about the importance of the manchas mongólicas but Dina Levi-Strauss did not have an answer. Her husband Claude Levi-Strauss explained the motivation of the study in a local publication. Claude Levi-Strauss, "Em prol de um instituto de antropologia física e cultural," *Revista Arquivo do Municipio* 18 (Nov-Dec 1935): 247-257.

Historians that have written on the DC&R's ethnography projects have spent little time examining the motivation behind the research projects. Scholars Vera Lucia Cardim de Cerqueira, Carlos Sandroni, and Luísa Valentini have highlighted the contributions of Dina Levi-Strauss in training the institution's scholars.⁴ Antonio Gilberto Ramos Nogueira has pointed out the pioneering role of the department ethnographers in recognizing and cataloguing non-material cultural patrimony.⁵ Flavia Camargo Toni, to give another example, demonstrated that the ethnographic endeavor serving as the DC&R's crowning glory—the 1938 “Mission of Folkloric Research”—was a reconstruction of a research trip that Mário de Andrade had taken ten years earlier.⁶ This chapter benefits from this body of scholarship, and in turn contributes the intellectual history necessary to make sense of the research projects. In short, the students had been trained in accordance with the department leader's theory of a Brazilian primitive mentality. They then formulated research projects allowing for an anthropology and psychoanalysis of the national psyche.

The chapter also contributes to broader conversations regarding the nature and uses of national identity projects in twentieth-century Brazil. Since the work of Benedict

⁴ Vera Lúcia Cardim de Cerqueira, “Contribuições de Samuel Lowrie e Dina Levi-Strauss ao Departamento de Cultura de São Paulo, (1935-1938)” (master's thesis, PUC São Paulo, 2010); Carlos Sandroni, “Mário, Oneyda, Dina e Claude,” *Revista do Patrimônio Histórico Artístico Nacional*, Brasília: Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico Artístico Nacional, IPHAN, 30 (2002): 232-245; Luísa Valentini, “Um laboratório de antropologia: o encontro entre Mário de Andrade, Dina Dreyfus e Claude Levi-Strauss,” (master's thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2010).

⁵ Antonio Gilberto Ramos Nogueira, “Por um inventário dos sentidos: Mário de Andrade e a concepção de patrimônio e inventário,” (PhD diss., Hucitec: FAPESP São Paulo, 2005).

⁶ Flavia Camargo Toni. *Missão de Pesquisas Folclórica: do Departamento de Cultura* (Divisão de Difusão Cultural: no date). See also Carlos Sandroni, “Mário de Andrade e a música do Nordeste,” *Continente Multicultural* (Recife, February 2005), 18-20; Carlos Sandroni, “Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas: Música tradicional do Norte e Nordeste, 1938,” *Revista do IEB* 46 (February 2008): 275-7; Carlos Sandroni, “Relatório final do projeto: As gravações da Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas no Nordeste (1938),” *Fundação Vitae/CCSP* (1997-8).

Anderson, many historians have taken for granted that Latin American elites in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries fostered national identity by using print media to portray the nation as an “imagined community” sharing common beliefs and values.⁷ This notion has been repeatedly revisited and challenged in subsequent generations of scholarship, most recently in Barbara Weinstein’s exploration of the ways in which national identity in Brazil has been both racialized and regionalized. In *Color of Modernity*, Weinstein argued that political leaders in 1930s São Paulo defended modernity as “white”, contrasting this to their homogenized vision of a backwards “black” Northeastern region.⁸ This chapter nuances Weinstein’s arguments by adding a key insight: discourses surrounding modernity in 1930s São Paulo focused not only on skin color but also on mentality. The work of the São Paulo ethnography community is representative of a wider belief that nationality was built into the psyche of all Brazilians while certain people groups within the nation possessed an inferior mentality. On a national level, insistence on internal rather than physical difference facilitated São Paulo’s project of homogenizing Brazil’s Northeast region in spite of its wide variety of skin colors and demographics. Locally, the belief served as a mechanism allowing São Paulo’s elites to conflate race with class. After years of invoking a discourse of essential racial difference used to justify stripping black communities of access to education and jobs, São Paulo’s local elite then applied the same discourse to their working-classes, regardless of skin color, to justify paternalist education programs. This chapter unpacks

⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006 [1983]).

⁸ Barbara Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity: São Paulo and the Making of Race and Nation in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

the elite use of social science frameworks to corroborate a national identity built to withstand and propagate internal racial and class divisions.

This discussion is particularly timely given debates over “coloniality,” a term referring to the imperial construction of class, gender, racial, and religious hierarchies that determine not only life chances but also what is defined as true. Scholars have suggested that these hierarchies themselves must be reconsidered in order to lessen prejudice, violence, and inequality. Most recently, historians of Latin America have defended that such a project needs to start with the social sciences, in order to then change broader epistemologies. These scholars have termed this process “delinking” from coloniality.⁹ Andrade’s writing makes it clear that he worked towards just such a “de-linking” but ultimately maintained a colonial framework. The case demonstrates that coloniality is a challenge to exit, but not because citizens in the post-colony lack the creativity to formulate other ways of knowing. Rather, these epistemologies provide paradigms that facilitate nation-building projects, the production of new research, and the maintenance of political power. These incentives kept both Andrade and his ethnography students from leaving behind European hierarchies and prejudice.

This chapter opens with an overview of relevant philosophical and social scientific ideas in circulation in turn-of-the-century Brazil, focusing on those that most

⁹ Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America,” *Nepentia: Views From the South* 1, 3 (2000): 533-580; Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3 March-May 2007): 168-178; Arturo Escobar, “Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise,” *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3 March-May 2007): 179-210; Ramón Grosfoguel, “The Epistemic Decolonial Turn,” *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3 March-May 2007): 211-223; Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2011); Walter D. Mignolo, “Delinking,” *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3 March-May 2007): 449-514; Walter D. Mignolo, “Introduction: Coloniality of Power and De-Colonial Thinking,” *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3 March-May 2007): 155-167; and Freya Schiwy, “Decolonization and the Question of Subjectivity,” *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3 March-May 2007): 271-294.

influenced Andrade. It then analyzes his publications throughout the 1920s-30s, showing how he slowly built a case for a theory of national psychology. Ample attention is given to these ideas because they were accepted and reproduced in the work of the ethnography students and local composers.¹⁰ The chapter culminates in the examination of how the ethnographers reproduced these ideas in their own research projects. The conclusion reflects on what the theory of national psychology shows regarding São Paulo elites' engagement of European conceptual frameworks.

Source material for this chapter comes first from Andrade's own literary production, including posthumous publications. This body of writing includes novels, music criticism, newspaper editorials, ethnographic research, correspondence, and poetry. The chapter also examines the work of Andrade's scholarly influences: Sigmund Freud, Theodule-Armand Ribot, Sir James Frazer, and EB Tylor. This is based on a close reading of Andrade's personal copies of these works, with the respective marginalia. Finally, the chapter pulls from the archival records of the DC&R, its Music Library, and the publications of the department's research journal.

Atlantic Ideas

Brazil lacked liberal universities and social science programs before the 1930s, but lettered elites still read widely from, and added to, international scientific debates.¹¹ On a national level, fields such as scientific racism, primitivist anthropology, and

¹⁰ This responds to recent calls in the scholarly community to re-integrate historical findings on the beliefs of individual elites with research on their influence in the larger community. Darrin McMahon and Samuel Moyn, eds. *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹¹ Sérgio Miceli, ed., *História das Ciências Sociais no Brasil*, 2 vols (São Paulo: Editora Sumaré, 1995).

psychology informed political decisions regarding immigration, penal law, education, medical treatment, and policing. On a local level, these bodies of scholarship became central to Andrade's ideas of national identity.

Across the Atlantic, racism gained a scientific discourse in the second half of the nineteenth century. Scientists and intellectuals argued racial difference was a genetic separator, a physical reality instead of a social construction. Some, like Swiss zoologist Louis Agassiz, argued each race was a separate species, with certain races inferior to others. Agassiz visited Brazil in the 1860s and subsequently published a text denouncing Brazil as racially inferior. Scientists such as Agassiz measured skull sizes to lend credibility to ideas of Anglo-Saxon superiority, arguing that whites had larger brains. In Brazil, institutions like São Paulo's Museu Paulista and Rio de Janeiro's Museu Nacional applied these and other physical anthropology methods to the study of Brazil's indigenous communities.¹² Other scholars across the Atlantic argued that racial difference was not just biological but rather a result of historical and evolutionary factors.¹³ This could be just a damning: French authors Arthur Gobineau and Georges Vacher de Lapouge added sociohistorical writings to medical evidence to argue that nations with dark-skinned populations were condemned to economic underdevelopment and

¹² Thomas Skidmore, *Black Into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 48-64.

¹³ Emilia Viotti da Costa has explored how and why Brazilian scholars chose to read and engage the ideas of scientific racism in this period. Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 234-246.

backwardness. Brazilian elite's absorption in French culture meant that the work of these scholars was taken quite seriously.¹⁴

Still other theories combined racial ideologies with biology, social Darwinism, and even naturalism. One of these was called tropical determinism, and was widely debated in Brazil. Expressed in works like Henry Thomas Buckles' *History of Civilization in England*, tropical determinism argued that year-round production of tropical fruits and foodstuffs guaranteed endemic laziness. Furthermore, it suggested that the heat from tropical climates bred loose sexuality. Brazilian scholar Silvio Romero popularized the theory throughout Brazil by republishing Buckles' indictment in one of his own books.¹⁵

The ideas of laziness in the tropics mixed with portrayals of an oversexed Brazil was not new.¹⁶ The discourse had developed throughout Brazil's colonial period, a result of European travelers' exotic vision of the nation. Visitors manifested colonial desire in travel literature and paintings sold throughout Europe, portraying a seductive yet

¹⁴ Additional examinations of racial thought in this period can be found in Mark Adams, *The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil, and Russia*, Monographs on the History and Philosophy of Biology (New York: Oxford Univ Press, 1990); João Cruz Costa, *A History of Ideas in Brazil*, trans. by Suzette Macedo (Berkeley: Univ of California Press, 1964); Richard Graham, *The Idea of Race in Latin America* (Austin: Univ of Texas Press, 1990); Jeanette Eileen Jones and Patrick Sharp, *Darwin in Atlantic Cultures: Evolutionary Visions of Race, Gender, and Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Lilia Moritz Schwarz, *The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870–1930* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999); Nancy Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991). Julyan Peard's work on the Tropicalista School of Medicine in Salvador, Bahia, shows that already in the nineteenth century a group of doctors argued against European notions of scientific racism. Julyan Peard, *Race, Place, and Medicine: The Idea of the Tropics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

¹⁵ Skidmore, *Black Into White*, 33.

¹⁶ Antonello Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World: The History of A Polemic, 1750-1900* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973).

energating Brazil.¹⁷ The turn-of-the-century framework of tropical determinism rewrote these same concepts into a discourse backed by the authority of scientific language and method.¹⁸

International scholars were not the first to condemn laziness in the tropics. Brazil already had a long-standing *ideologia de vadiagem*, a series of ideas linking laziness and poverty with dark skin color. The idea—which could be translated as the ideology of “vagrancy” or “laziness”—arose as a discourse used by plantation owners to justify the physical abuse of slaves unwilling to work. After abolition, the notion mixed with the social-scientific racial and tropical theories.¹⁹ Together, the various ideologies augmented the fears harbored by political leaders, doctors, and lawyers about their nation. They turned to European immigration as a solution, believing that cultural and physical miscegenation between Brazilian blacks and European whites would uplift and whiten

¹⁷ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York, Routledge, 1992); David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing and Imperial Administration*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Nancy Stepan, *Picturing Tropical Nature*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2001; Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995).

¹⁸ On vagrancy and the *ideologia de vadiagem*, see Sidney Chalhoub, “Vadios e barões no ocaso do Império: O debate sobre a repressão da ociosidade na Câmara dos Deputados em 1888,” *Estudos Ibero-Americanos* 9, no. 1–2 (1983): 53–67; Chalhoub, *Trabalho, lar e botequim: O cotidiano dos trabalhadores no Rio de Janeiro da Belle Époque* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1986); Olívia Maria Gomes da Cunha, *Intenção e gesto: Pessoa, cor e produção da (in)diferença no Rio de Janeiro, 1927–1942* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 2002); Boris Fausto, *Crime e cotidiano: A criminalidade em São Paulo (1880–1924)*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 2000); Walter Fraga Filho, *Mendigos, moleques e vadios na Bahia do século XIX* (São Paulo: Hucitec, 1996); Thomas Flory, “Race and Social Control in Independent Brazil,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 9, no. 2 (1977): 199–224; Thomas H. Holloway, *Policing Rio de Janeiro: Repression and Resistance in a 19th-Century City* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1993); Martha Knisely Huggins, *From Slavery to Vagrancy in Brazil: Crime and Social Control in the Third World* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1985); Lúcio Kowarick, *Trabalho e vadiagem: A origem do trabalho livre no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1994).

¹⁹ For a notion of how the *ideologia de vadiagem* changed in the years of abolition, see Dain Borges, “‘Puffy, Ugly, Slothful, Inert’: Degeneration in Brazilian Social Thought, 1880–1940,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25, no. 2 (1993): 235–56; Dain Borges, “The Recognition of Afro-Brazilian Symbols and Ideas, 1890–1940,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 32, no. 3 (Winter 1995): 59–78; Jeffrey Needell, “The Domestic Civilizing Mission: The Cultural Role of the State in Brazil, 1808–1930,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 36, no. 1 (Summer 1999): 1–18.

the Brazilian population. This came to be known as the push for *branqueamento*, or racial whitening. The eugenic proposition seemed sensible at the time, because scientists asserted that Aryan and Anglo-Saxon races had superior genes that would outlast African phenotypes. Private institutions and government alike began to subsidize immigrant passages from Europe. São Paulo most heavily experienced the results of the project: Italians, Spaniards, Jews, Germans, Japanese, and many other populations settled in the city.²⁰

Among Brazilian intellectuals were a group of folklorists and writers heavily invested in using nascent fields in the social sciences to better understand their nation. In the field of anthropology, the English scholar Edward Burnett Tylor and the Scottish writer Sir James Frazer pioneered a field that investigated magic, myth, and religion with the aim of understanding what they termed the “primitive mind.” Primitives, according to the writers, included nomadic societies, tribal groups, and small kingdoms spanning Indonesia to Latin America. In effect, primitives were all colonized peoples. The scholarship reified a self/other binary separating Europeans from colonial subjects across the globe while serving as a defense of these colonial projects. In spite of the prejudice inherent in the very proposal of the project, the body of scholarship fundamentally influenced the development of generations of social scientists across the world.

²⁰ Skidmore, *Black Into White*. On immigration to São Paulo, see Thomas Holloway, *Immigrants on the Land: Coffee and Society in São Paulo, 1886-1934* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

Tylor's highly influential *Primitive Culture* (1871), presented a model of cultural evolution in dialogue with the work of Auguste Comte and Charles Darwin.²¹ The anthropologist borrowed the tripartite classification of time from the creator of Positivism and the process of change from the father of Evolution. Human groups began as animist, then became religious, and finally turned to science with an associated atheism. Introducing the category of "animism" into the social sciences, Tylor defined the term as the belief in a world pervaded by spirits, not just of the deceased, but also of every living organism or natural force. The belief came naturally, according to Tylor, from primitives' observation that dead bodies looked equal to those alive, but lacked breath. Breath became synonymous with a concept of spirit then projected onto all living beings. Dreams and trances served as experiential proof of the spiritual realm. They helped primitive tribes believe spirits and deities could stay with the community through repossessing a human mind or body. Tylor further ventured that the notion of spiritual possession began as an explanation for cases of epilepsy and mental disease. But, when epileptics began receiving positions of social power, other members of society self-induced trance states through fasting, drugs, or dancing. Such experiences eventually became institutionalized through religious ritual.²²

Spirits could also stay with the community by inhabiting fetishes. The term "fetish" as Tylor recognized, came from the Portuguese *feitiço*. Tylor wrote, "Centuries ago, the Portuguese in West Africa, noticing the veneration paid by the negroes to certain objects...called them *feitiço*...derived from Latin *factitius*." The Latin term suggests

²¹ Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*. 2 volumes (London: John Murray, 1874. [1871]).

²² Tylor, *Primitive*, 123-135.

artifice or imitation, reflecting the colonial vision that the African objects were false idols. But Tylor recognized that many members of primitive tribes believed the objects to hold religious power or actually serve as the dwelling place of the gods.

In the rest of his massive text, Tylor explored the evolutionary process from animism to monotheist Christian religion, and then to atheism. Fetishes eventually lost believers and were reduced to wooden idols. The pantheon of deities became increasingly stratified through a vertical hierarchy until a demanding supreme deity became the only one left venerated. Tylor's evolutionary model resulted in the conclusion that primitive groups were generations behind Europe's Christian communities, and even further backwards when compared to scientific atheism. But Tylor maintained that even primitive roots could still be found in developed societies. These were most visible in superstitions and contemporary rituals of etiquette that had long since lost their spiritual significance.

Sir James Frazer's 1890 magnum opus, *The Golden Bough*, suggested that the belief in magic separated primitive societies from civilized ones. Frazer asserted primitive communities faced severe limitations of knowledge and technology in relation to their natural environment. These societies completely relied on the land to survive, but were ignorant of agricultural growth processes and climate cycles. Recognizing their own impotence, the groups turned to magic: the attempt to indirectly engage an object through the principles of imitation or contagion. In the former, an individual attempted to imitate that which he wanted to see realized. A farmer may pour water on the earth in hopes that rain would follow, or sleep with his wife in the fields to invoke agricultural fertility. In the case of contagious magic, what was done to a limb was imagined as reverberating

through the entire body or anything it touched. A woman may cut a stolen hair follicle from an enemy, imagining her enemy, too, would be cut. Or, after a battle, a man could thrust his sword into his fire, believing anyone cut by his blade earlier that day would suffer the burn.²³

Frazer then engaged an elaborate reading of tribal ritual based on this paradigm of magic. The author interpreted yearly animal sacrifice as a case of imitative magic. Tribal groups often had a special venerated animal, referred to as a totem. Whereas sociologist Emile Durkheim would, a decade later, argue that tribes used totem animals to enshrine value systems, Frazer suggested instead that totemic societies understood the revered animal to be filled with divine virility. They spilled the blood of the totem species on the ground to release its youthful energy, bringing fertility to the land for the subsequent harvest.²⁴

Years before Andrade and the São Paulo ethnographers, Brazilians began to apply social science frameworks to local sociocultural practices. Nineteenth-century doctor Raimundo Nina Rodrigues had studied Afro-Brazilian religious practices and, like Tylor, tried to understand the phenomenon of spirit possession from a scientific perspective. The Brazilian doctor concluded possession was a degenerate psychological state more accessible to blacks because of weaker cerebral development.²⁵ To corroborate his argument, Rodrigues borrowed from the criminal psychology of Cesare Lombroso to argue for psychological hierarchies. Blacks, Amerindians, and mulatos were “inferior

²³ Sir James George Frazer, *Golden Bough: A Study of Magic and Religion* (Reprinted, Abridged Single Volume, Temple of Earth Publishing), 19-30.

²⁴ Frazer, *Golden Bough*, 441b. Andrade paraphrased this idea in *Danças Dramáticas*, 32.

²⁵ Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, *L'animisme fétichiste des nègres de Bahia* (Bahia, 1900).

racas,” psychologically underdeveloped, and not fully conscious of the implications of their behavior. This made them susceptible to possession and less accountable for their criminal behavior.²⁶ His work, alongside that of other Brazilian psychologists in the following decades, would encourage governmental authorities to put prohibitions on Afro-Brazilian religious rituals.

In the early twentieth century, Lombrosian psychology was overshadowed by social psychology and the psychoanalytic method developed by Sigmund Freud. Professors and psychiatrists such as Juliano Moreira, professor at the Medical College in Bahia, introduced new ideas to medical students.²⁷ European artists, such as the surrealists, inspired Brazil’s artistic and academic students to pay particular attention to Freudian ideas. Multiple forms of psychology put to different ends, then, came to exercise a strong influence on Brazilian intellectuals.

Freud agreed with other psychologists of his generation that each mind held a reservoir of hidden knowledge. This was the “unconscious,” the area of the mind storing memories too painful or distant to be present in the conscious memory. The unconscious also held repressed desires. The mind constantly self-censored to keep the individual from becoming aware of its backstage content. Freud suggested an intervention, which he

²⁶ Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, *As raças humana e a responsabilidade penal no Brasil* (Bahia, 1894).

²⁷ Elisabeth Mokejcs, *A psicanálise no Brasil: As origens do pensamento psicanalítico* (Rio de Janeiro: Vozes, 1993); Marialzira Perestrello, *Encontros: Psicanálise & Rio de Janeiro*, (Imago Editora, 1992); Gilberto S. Rocha, *Introdução ao nascimento da psicanálise no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 1989).

called psychoanalysis, that took advantage of the self's verbal slips and other mistakes in self-policing to pull back the curtains on the psyche.²⁸

The father of psychoanalysis elaborated on his method of analysis in his most famous work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Believing dream interpretation an effective method of revealing unconscious desires, Freud suggested the patient repeat their dream after having entered a relaxed state comparable to hypnosis. The psychologist could aid in this transition by providing low lighting, a place for the patient to recline, and verbal suggestions to the patient to speak freely without self-censoring. The diminished state of consciousness would allow analyst and patient to arrive at a fuller understanding of the self, complete with forgotten traumas and denied desires.²⁹

The *Interpretation of Dreams* along with Freud's other critical texts *Three Contributions to the Theory on Sex* and *Totem and Taboo* provided readers a set of resources with which to analyze not only dreams, but also myths. Brazilian psychologists quickly put this into practice to make sense of collective behaviors. Porto-Carrero wrote a text interpreting São Paulo's 1932 Constitutionalist Revolt as an Oedipal struggle for authority.³⁰ Psychologist and education reformer Arthur Ramos psycho-analyzed Afro-Brazilian religious ceremony. In his *O Negro Brasileiro*, Ramos concluded that the Brazilian people had a folkloric unconscious, meaning the nation shared a collective

²⁸ Sigmund Freud, *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* in *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud: Psychopathology of Everyday Life; The Interpretation of Dreams; Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex; Wit and its Relations to the Unconscious; Totem and Taboo; History of the Psychoanalytic Movement*, by Sigmund Freud, trans. and ed. Abraham Arden Brill (New York: The Modern Library, 1995).

²⁹ Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*, in Freud, *The Basic Writings*.

³⁰ JP Porto Carrero, *Psicanalise de uma civilização* (Editora Guanabara: Rio de Janeiro, 1934), ch 2.

psychology.³¹ By the 1930s, Brazil already had a community of intellectuals blending ethnography with psychoanalysis to understand the nation.

The Modernist Method

Andrade's interest in psychology and primitive anthropology began as he prepared the book of poetry that would help officially inaugurate Brazil's modernist movement. The inaugural text was *Pauliceia Desvairada*, or Hallucinated City, a book of poetry about the city of São Paulo. The text was presented by what Andrade titled, partially in jest, "Most-Interesting Preface." The preface, along with Andrade's subsequent book *A escrava que não é Isaura* (The Slave that is not Isaura), set forth Andrade's method and guiding principles for the creation of modernist art. *Isaura* can be considered an expanded discussion on the manifesto-vignettes set forth in the "Preface." While Andrade referenced dozens of poets and intellectuals in these texts, his work was most closely in dialogue with Freud and Théodule Armand Ribot, whose psychological assertions had a lasting influence on Andrade's conceptions of art and nation.

Drafted in 1922 and published two years later, *Isaura* presents the clearer description of Andrade's modernist method of artistic creation. The book begins with a retelling of the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. A close reader, Andrade understood that the Yahweh of the biblical creation story had initially encouraged Adam to solve man's problem of solitude, not through the creation of Eve, but by naming the animals and birds. By focusing on this detail, Andrade added biblical corroboration to his own idea that creative expression was central to a life of edenic abundance. He rewrote

³¹ Arthur Ramos, *O Negro Brasileiro*.

the rest of the creation story by personifying speech itself as Adam's first female love. But Adam enslaved this love, and covered her beauty up with leaves. All successive patriarchs adorned their speech-slave with additional garments, each layer further obscuring speech, transforming affect into affectation. It was only in the nineteenth century that a poet named Arthur Rimbaud had stripped off the garments-turned-bonds, granting words their manumission. This, said Andrade, was the task that Brazilian modernists must continue: liberate speech for maximum expression.³²

The essay's title played on one of Brazil's most successful nineteenth-century romantic novels, *The Slave Isaura*, an abolitionist romance by Bernardo Guimarães in which the light-skinned slave Isaura is rescued by her lover from the hands of the evil plantation owner. Andrade's title was not simply a reference to the speech parable but also a call for future writers to distinguish their work against the romantic genre, of which Guimarães' text served as metonym. The young modernist wanted Brazilian authors to free their own creative works from the bonds of formulaic genres in vogue because of their association with Europe.

In *Escrava*, Andrade stated that his conception of modernism could be summarized in two assertions. Modernism aimed first to reintegrate the arts with modern life and second to free the unconscious. Reintegrating the arts with the present meant that modernists ought to refer to and depict twentieth-century material culture. He exemplified this well in the memorable line: "Love exists. But now it travels by

³² Andrade, *Obra Imatura*, 201-3. Rimbaud, a French poet of the late-nineteenth century with a large influence on modernist poetry, led a wandering life and engaged substance abuse in search of altered emotional states stimulating his poetic creations.

automobile.”³³ The assertion also referred to language. Andrade invited authors to write in the Brazilian vernacular. This was a provocative suggestion for a period in which novels and poems featured a formal Portuguese divorced from everyday speech.

Andrade’s second aim, to free the unconscious, was largely a result of his close reading of the psychology of aesthetics presented by French psychologist Théodule Armand Ribot. The psychologist proposed a model of artistic creation in which ideas were gestated in the unconscious, then delivered into the conscious realm, and finally developed into mature works of art through rigorous construction or development.³⁴ In his *Essay on the Creative Imagination*, Ribot wrote, “inspiration resembles a crypted telegram that the unconscious transmits to the conscious self, which translates it.”³⁵

Andrade borrowed the image of the telegram in his own modernist manifesto, championing its democratic potential: if the unconscious could inspire art, then all men and women could be poets. Andrade wrote: “The unconscious is sending telegrams and more telegrams to the intellect—to borrow from Ribot’s comparison. The intellect of the poet—no longer living in an ivory tower—receives the telegram in the tramway, when the poor guy goes to the public office [*repartição*], to the college of philosophy, or to the movies.”³⁶ The sentence is revealing: Andrade argued that pulling from the unconscious

³³ Mário de Andrade, *Obra Imatura* (São Paulo: Martins Editora, 1960), 211.

³⁴ Théodule Armand Ribot, *Essai sur L’imagination Créatrice* (Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan, 1921), passim, see especially the diagrams on 130-1.

³⁵ Ribot, *Essai*, “L’inspiration ressemble à une dépêche chiffrée que l’activité inconsciente transmet à l’activité consciente, que la traduit... “Inspiration” signifie imagination inconsciente et n’en est même qu’un cas particulier. L’imagination consciente est un appareil de perfectionnement.”

³⁶ “É o subconsciente enviando à inteligência telegramas e mais telegramas—para me servir da comparação de Ribot. A inteligência do poeta—o qual não mora mais numa tôrre de marfim—recebe o telegrama no bonde; quando o pobre vai para a repartição, para a Faculdade de Filosofia, para o cinema.” Andrade, *Obra Imatura*, 209.

would make for a wider group of artists, yet there are clearly limits to Andrade's inclusion. In place of the ivory-tower poets, Andrade made space for the young bourgeoisie. Brazil's next generation of poets went to the movies and were enrolled in the philosophy department. Even the comment about the "poor guy" excluded the impoverished lower classes; the phrase was an exclamation of sympathy for the young bureaucrat that spent his day in a government office; this was a thumb at the nose at Brazil's bureaucracy.

In the margins of his copy of Ribot, Andrade penciled a comment that provides a powerful image of his belief that elites needed to define and control what constituted valuable Brazilian art. This occurred in the text where Ribot concluded that, after artists pulled inspiration from their unconscious, they ought improve upon the ideas through the use of their conscious imagination: "The conscious imagination is a perfecting mechanism [*appareil de perfectionnement*]." In the margin of his copy of the text, Andrade translated the whole paragraph into Portuguese, but modified the last line, writing instead "The conscious imagination *acts as reins, bridling* and perfecting."³⁷ The change in language is revealing: Andrade found it necessary to temper the uncontrolled nature of the unconscious with the image of the bridling reins. Early on, Andrade put this into practice simply by encouraging his students to redraft their poems. But in the 1930s, Andrade reworked the modernist method to apply to the nation instead of the individual. The formula assigned elites the role of the nation's conscious self. The masses were the incarnation of the nation's unconscious. At that point, Ribot's formula had two

³⁷ Emphasis added. "A imaginação consciente é a rédea que prende e aperfeiçoa," In Andrade's copy of Ribot, *Essai*, 1921. Biblioteca Mário de Andrade, IEB.

implications. Politically, the DC&R functioned as the bridle, reigning in any unhealthy (read unproductive) desires of the masses. Artistically, the reworked formula suggested the urban masses and rural Afo-Brazilian and Amerindian communities produced inspirational artesan material, but never high art. It was up to white, bourgeois artists to rework this material into something of high value. But before Andrade could arrive at this formula, he needed more information on the unconscious, and turned to the father of psychoanalysis for answers.

Like Ribot, Freud suggested the unconscious as a source of artistic inspiration when, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, he quoted from the German poet Friedrich Schiller's letters on the creative process: "In the case of a creative mind, it seems to me, the intellect has withdrawn its watchmen from the gates, and the ideas rush in pell-mell, and only then does it review and inspect the multitude."³⁸ Freud wanted his patients, too, to recount their dreams freely and without censorship, sharing even the absurd details. It was in the illogical contradictions of the dream that the analyst could best note the desires of the patient's unconscious mind.³⁹ Andrade applied the idea to his own city. The absurd and contradictory aspects of São Paulo—making it a hallucinated city—deserved to be articulated. Andrade's urban poetry declared the São Paulo experience was not a coherent one, and indeed could only be understood if that incoherence was explored.

But just as Andrade put a bridle on Ribot's paragraph, so too he called back Freud's watchman at the gates. In the "Preface," Andrade described an immigrant named Sir Lyricism traveling from the unconscious world and disembarking at the port of

³⁸ Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*, 161.

³⁹ Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*, 160 and ch 2 in general.

consciousness. There, customs officials (the watchmen) working for the state censorship department detained unhealthy and contagious ideas, doctoring them until clean enough to enter the new society.⁴⁰ The metaphor triggered images of Santos, the port city connected to São Paulo via the trainrail that had brought so many immigrants to the hallucinated city. In addition to defending the need for censorship, the metaphor served as the first of many comparisons between individual psychology and the larger nation. Over the next decade, Andrade would increasingly take studies of individual psychology as applicable to social, and then national, psychology.

This individual-to-national connection allowed Andrade to move from thinking about individual primitives to thinking about his entire nation as primitive. Presenting one of the single most important ideas to shape Andrade's thinking, Ribot argued that primitive tribes treated the arts not as entertainment to be consumed, but rather to educate and regulate social life. Ribot wrote:

Primitive dance is martial, religious, erotic; it communicates symbolically a peace treaty, rekindling of friendship, a successful hunt, the harvest, in a word, it is the principal event of social life.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Andrade, *Poesias Completas*, 73. We need not imagine a discussion of super-ego at this point. Andrade's primary Freudian reference would be three texts: *Three Essays on Sexuality*, *Interpretation of Dreams*, and, in 1926, *Totem and Taboo*. *Interpretation of Dreams* set forth the relevant model of the psyche, featuring the unconscious, the preconscious (the watchmen at the gate), and the conscious. At the end of *Interpretation*, the ego makes its first appearance in Freud's work. The super-ego would not be added to Freud's model of the psyche until its mention in the 1919 "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" and the elaboration in the 1923 "The Ego and the Id," taking additional time for translation into French. The concept of the super-ego never became critical to Andrade's model.

⁴¹ "nous sommes en face d'une *forme éteinte* de la création affective. Évidemment, cet art est depuis longtemps en état de régression; mais à l'époque lointaine de son apogée, non dans ses survivances actuelles, il est presque en entier une création de la vie émotionnelle. La danse primitive est guerrière, religieuse, érotique; elle exprime symboliquement un traité de paix, une rencontre d'amis, une chasse heureuse, le commencement ou la fin des moissons, en un mot les principaux événements de la vie sociale." Ribot, *Logique*, 153.

For Ribot, the arts served as the principle event of primitive social life. Music and dance brought unity, healing, and education. Andrade took this very seriously, and paraphrased the above-quoted citation in key moments of his own essays.⁴²

Andrade accepted that if his nation was itself primitive, music was the best tool for socialization. Already in the closing lines of *Hallucinated City* Andrade expressed the hope that he himself could bring that function of the arts back to what he fashioned the primitive “tribe” of São Paulo: “In this moment, a dark and bespectacled Amphion will construct the stone walls with the magic of my song. And within these walls, we will protect our tribe.”⁴³ Andrade borrowed from the Greek myth, setting himself as Amphion in a quest to protect a thebian São Paulo through the use of music. Over the next two decades, Andrade engaged three projects: he gathered evidence to validate his idea that the nation was primitive; he found a way to scale his modernist method from individual to national creation; and he worked to make music a regular part of life in São Paulo.

Researching the Primitive

The investigation into Brazilian primitivity served as a common thread through Andrade’s research trips and writing in the 1920s. A 1926 trip to see sculptures and architecture in the neighboring state of Minas Gerais, a 1927 boat ride down the Amazon River, and a 1928 ethnographic visit to four states in Brazil’s Northeast provided Andrade with eye and earwitness accounts of ceremonies and songs that he accepted to be the artistic creation of a primitive people. Returning from each trip, Andrade analyzed

⁴² Andrade, *Ensaio sobre a musica brasileira*. 3rd ed (São Paulo: Martins Editora, 1972 [1928]), 18; Andrade, *Namoros com a medicina* (Belo Horizonte: Livraria Martins Editora, 1980), 15, 24.

⁴³ Andrade, *Poesias Completas*, 31.

the material through a primitivist paradigm and then creatively crafted his ideas on the music and customs into essays, lectures, and even a novel. Some of these works appeared to praise Brazilian primitivity, others seemed to condemn it. Andrade's attitude, however, was less contradictory than it was contingent. It can be outlined in three theses, which will then be unpacked by turning to the works themselves. First, Andrade redeemed primitivity as it pertained to the arts. Believing that artistic creation was born from primitive fears, beliefs, and downtime, Andrade appreciated primitivity in Brazil to the extent that it endowed the nation with notable artistic ability. Second, he willingly accepted the notion of a Brazilian primitive mentality because it presented education (instead of European immigration) as a viable solution for Brazilian underdevelopment. Combined with the notion that primitive groups learn best through socialization rooted in the arts, this presented Andrade a justification for public spending on artistic education in the community. Finally, Andrade took advantage of the race/class/region distinctions imbedded in the primitivist discourse to justify the supremacy of whites, elites, and the city of São Paulo in the larger nation, and to then defend the maintenance of hierarchies in art, education, and society.

In his 1928-9 trip to the states of Pernambuco, Alagoas, Rio Grande do Norte, and Paraíba, Andrade witnessed a string of cultural celebrations centered around the ox. In 1934, the poet-turned-ethnographer wrote a study entitled "Dramatic Dances in Brazil," which concluded that the celebrations evidenced that Brazilians had historically held the ox as their totem."⁴⁴ The study focused on the folkloric dance celebration called *Bumba*

⁴⁴ The essay was published first in the *Boletim Latino-Americano da Música* and then as the introduction to a posthumous volume of Andrade's transcriptions. Mário de Andrade, *Danças Dramáticas do Brasil* (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia Limitada, 1982), 39.

Meu Boi, roughly translated as “Boom! My Ox.” While the dance has as many variations as it does regions performing it (the dance is performed widely across Brazil), the central drama recounts the plight of a poor cowhand working for a rich landowner. The landowner entrusts his prize ox to the young man during a trip to the city. But the good-hearted fieldhand soon finds himself in a moral dilemma and ends up killing the ox to feed his hungry and pregnant wife. Hearing of the landowners’ imminent return, the cowboy searches desperately for a way to revive the beast. He first seeks help from a doctor, but the medic lacks the skills to perform a resurrection. Desperate, the young man turns to the local *pagé*, or Amerindian healer. The healer chants, dances, blows smoke, and invokes the gods until the animal comes back to life, saving the poor family.

Andrade turned to the primitivist anthropologists to account for the Bumba ceremony. Convinced the ox was a totem—an animal ascribed divine power and extolled by a community for the values it embodies—Andrade could have looked to either Durkheim or Frazer, since both scholars researched the role of sacred animals in primitive society. But Andrade’s copy of Durkheim’s *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* is void of marginalia. Nor is Durkheim’s work ever cited in Andrade’s writings. The Brazilian scholar instead relied on Frazer. In his copy of *The Golden Bough*, Andrade bracketed the entire first section of Chapter 49 and wrote “Bumba” in the margins. The section recounted the story of an ancient Athenian ritual ox sacrifice with a startling likeness to the Bumba ceremony. Both occurred in the month of June, centered around the murder of the ox, featured a trial to find the killer (variant versions of Bumba contain a trial or denunciation), and finish with a resurrection. In the margins of another chapter explaining the yearly sacrifice, Andrade penciled: “Shows that the ox cult, in Bumba...is

a transformation of the vegetable cult to the animal cult.”⁴⁵ He then reproduced Frazer’s explanation in the article on dramatic dances, explaining that primitive groups lacked the technical skills to ensure the subsequent harvest, resulting in their turn towards “imitative magic, the vegetable cult...the totem, and principally, on a general level, the notion of the death and resurrection of the totem, the sun, the ox.”⁴⁶

Andrade refrained from providing commentary on the melodies and lyrics collected. *Danças Dramáticas* provides no hints as to what Andrade made of a Brazilian people capable of sublimating an animal sacrifice into a dramatic dance. Not only is the dance a sublimation, it is also a ritual that engages social criticism through caricature. Bumba comments on circumstances representative of Brazilian social situations: antagonism between poor cowhand and wealthy landowner; the complicity of a neighboring worker ready to denounce the cowboy to earn favor from the landowner; the criticism of European medicine represented in the doctor’s inadequacy; and the recourse to alternative medicine in dire circumstances. In not drawing attention to these issues, Andrade missed the opportunity to show fellow scholars the contemporary relevance of Brazilian ritual. His primary concern was instead to highlight that the sacrificial centerpiece of the Bumba ceremony confirmed that Brazil was born in primitivism.

On first glance, it seems that Andrade’s research on the ox died with him, since the transcription project was never published in his own lifetime. Even Andrade’s petition for his friend Luciano Gallet to use some of the Boi tunes to create an erudite

⁴⁵ Sir James Frazer, *Le Rameau D’or: édition abregée* (1923), 282. Biblioteca de Mário de Andrade, IEB.

⁴⁶ “nas culturas primitivas surgiu na forma de magia homeopática, mimética, o culto do vegetal... o totem, e principalment, por mais genérica, a noção de morte a ressurreição da terra, do sol, do boi.” Andrade, *Danças*, 32.

symphonic work failed when Gallet, too, died shortly after the request. But Andrade's ideas gained fertility when he transferred them onto a second Brazilian totem: the sloth.

The Signifyin' Sloth

During his 1927 trip through Amazonia, Andrade wrote a series of newspaper editorials published in São Paulo under the title "Turista Aprendiz," or Apprentice Tourist. The series formed a parody of Brazil's colonial and nineteenth-century travel literature. The ethnographer, recognizing himself as unable to explore his own Brazil without following in European footsteps, decided to add his voice to the chorus, but to sing with parody's subversive harmony. Within the series, he included a handful of editorials narrating a fictitious encounter with an imaginary tribe of Amerindians called the "Do-Mi-Sols." Andrade playfully assured his readers they could take his word, and only his word, since he was the only individual to ever establish contact with the community.⁴⁷

The name "Do-Mi-Sol" refers to solfege, the musical practice of giving a specific syllable to each note in a scale. The syllables Do, Mi, and Sol form a major triad, the musical chord associated with simplicity, harmony, and stability; Andrade was likely suggesting these as the tribe's core values. In any case, the tribe received its name

⁴⁷ The "Os Índios Do-Mi-Sol" vignettes in *Turista Aprendiz* are similar in function to the didactic 1956 essay by Horace Miner called the "Body Ritual Among the Nacimera" in that both essays present what appear to be primitive tribes as a tool of defamiliarization, jarring the reader away from daily reality enough to break down ethnocentrism. The vignettes are available in the posthumously published compilation, Mário de Andrade, *O Turista Aprendiz* (São Paulo: Livraria Duas Culturas, 1976), with introduction and notes by Telê Porto Ancona Lopez. The series is called "Os Índios Do-Mi-Sol" and appear in selective entries between pages 90-162.

because its members only sang. Speaking was permitted only in the most intimate environments.

One day the tribe took Andrade out to the middle of the jungle where they encountered a Cecropia tree towering more than two-thousand feet above them. There the Amerindians spoke of the war won by their ancestors, the sloths. “It was in the canopy of this tree that the famous fight between the howler monkeys and the sloths occurred,” recounted one of them.⁴⁸ The apprentice tourist felt confused and surprised that sloths would enter a war considering how lazy and slow he took them to be. Upon voicing the observation, the Do-Mi-Sols laughed. Sloths were not actually lazy, they explained to the amateur ethnographer. The species had unjustly received that defamatory label. Sloths were more than capable of quick action but were wise enough to know not every situation required a rapid response. Finishing their speech to the astonished scholar, the group proudly related that their tribe had, in fact, descended from the sloths.

This was the beginning of a larger project. Andrade was presenting the nation with its new totem: the sloth. The animal’s symbolic qualities placed it at the juncture between positive and negative associations with primitivity. Andrade recognized that European naturalists and scholars of scientific racism had condemned Brazil’s Africans and Amerindians as prone to idleness and vagrancy. In the late nineteenth and early-twentieth century, this plagued Brazilian elites with anxieties about the future of their nation. These fears motivated the transatlantic immigration project—Europeans were believed to have a better work ethic—and justified anti-vagrancy campaigns in urban

⁴⁸ Andrade, *Turista Aprendiz*, 161.

centers.⁴⁹ Andrade made an ideological intervention in his fictional ethnographic account, rehabilitating the sloth/laziness (*preguiça* refers to both the animal and the character trait) to the extent that it had engendered a tribe of musical speakers bound in social harmony.

Andrade defended the sloth's slow motion as emblematic of Brazil's rich sense of aesthetics; before the term "aesthetics" referred to concern for beauty, it denoted perception of movement. In the imaginary ethnographic encounter, the tribe's elders came forward to speak with Andrade, introducing themselves as "totemic philosophers." They explained the knowledge held by sloths, making them so wise: "happiness in life is not the joy of life's pleasures," reported the philosophers, "but rather the complete awareness of movement."⁵⁰ The phrase itself was a reformulation of an idea set forth by Paul Souriau, a writer on aesthetics that Andrade had become familiar with as professor in the São Paulo Conservatory. In his 1889 *The Aesthetics of Movement*, Souriau asserted that perception of beauty was directly linked to efficiency and grace in movement.⁵¹ The turn to aesthetics served as the first proof that laziness, and by extension primitivity, was not void of value.

Slothfulness as connection to and control over the body then meant that the totem could remind Brazilians to defend against the excesses of the industrialized world. The age of the machine was both subjecting the body to mechanization and transforming the aesthetic to the machine itself, explored less than a decade later in the respected article by

⁴⁹ George Reid Andrews, *Blacks and Whites in São Paulo, Brazil 1888-1988* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 48; Marc Hertzman, "Making Music and Masculinity in Vagrancy's Shadow: Race, Wealth, and *Malandragem* in Post-Abolition Rio de Janeiro," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 90, no. 4 (Nov 2010): 591-625.

⁵⁰ Andrade, *Turista*, 162.

⁵¹ Paul Souriau, *The Aesthetics of Movement*, trans. by Manon Souriau (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984. [1889]).

Walter Benjamin.⁵² Protecting against an overly-industrialized lifestyle could help protect mental health and ferment creativity. Andrade frequently wrote in correspondence to friends and students that “religiously reserving hours to practicing slothfulness” made him a more productive artist and brought him a better quality of life.⁵³ He recognized a certain bit of slothfulness as a sagacious response to the demands of the industrialized world.

Andrade had already been thinking about the sloth as a Brazilian totem for some time. He was so taken with the idea that he had already begun gestation of a novel featuring the sloth as a Brazilian hero. This became the text for which the modernist leader is best known.

Macunaíma came out a year later, in 1928, and told the story of a boy born in the Amazon, bearing the name of the work’s title and very much bearing the nature of the sloth from which his tribe has presumably descended. He made this manifest not only in rejecting every single arduous task placed before him, but also in constantly yawning aloud a catchphrase now commonplace: “ai, que preguiça!” the exclamation of laziness that can be translated as, “oh, what slothfulness!”⁵⁴

⁵² Andrade himself wrote of the mechanization of the self, claiming, “In this age of the machine, I have the delicious pride of having sufficiently mechanized those parts and functions...mechanizable of the human body.”

(“Nestes tempos da máquina, tenho o delicioso orgulho de me maquinizar bastante nas partes e funções...maquinizáveis do ser humano.”) Andrade and Alvarenga, *Cartas*, 43. See also Charlie Chaplain’s *Modern Times* and Joel Dinerstein’s monograph on mechanization of the body between the world wars. Joel Dinerstein, *Swinging the Machine: Modernity, Technology and African American Culture Between the World Wars* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003). Regarding the transition of aesthetic preference to the machine itself, see Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, trans. JA Underwood (London: Penguin, 2008).

⁵³ Andrade and Alvarenga, *Cartas*, 43, 46.

⁵⁴ Mário de Andrade, *Macunaíma: O herói sem nenhum caráter* (Agir: Rio de Janeiro, 2008 [1928]).

Andrade baptized his novel a “rhapsody,” a term appropriate both for its musical writing and combinations of the motifs Andrade had been researching about Brazil’s primitive mind: fetish, language, music, myth, and totem. All of these are present and bound together in a single, knowable Brazil. Yet this occurs through Andrade taking the poetic license to make the protagonist unbound linguistically and geographically. Macunaima’s speech combined slang and popular idioms from all over the country, further supplemented by words from Amerindian languages like Tupi-Guaraní. Geographically, the hero could wake up in the Amazon and take an afternoon stroll to the Northeastern coast and back again. Once in São Paulo, Macunaíma visits a mansion with a window view all the way across the Atlantic. Andrade’s condensation of the nation—the “condensation” maybe intentionally reflecting the Freudian dream—had the hallucinatory effect of making all of Brazil knowable in a single space, or at least in a single text.⁵⁵

As Andrade’s most-successful publication, *Macunaima* has received extensive attention by literary critics and historians alike.⁵⁶ Instead of revisiting these analyses, this

⁵⁵ Andrade no doubt also meant the text as a reflection of the city of São Paulo, a place formed by the people, sounds, language, and foods of all of Brazil’s myriad regions. This argument is subtly suggested in José Miguel Wisnik, “Te manduco, não manduca: A música popular de São Paulo,” *Literatura e Sociedade* (2001): 248-256. The case of the window view to Europe is also a play on attitudes and desires of local elites who either wanted to imagine Europe outside their window or prided themselves on being so familiar with Europe they could treat it as only a block away.

⁵⁶Key literary criticism of *Macunaima* includes Cavalcanti Proença, *Roteiro de Macunaima* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1969); Haroldo de Campos, *Morfologia de Macunaima* (São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2008); Gilda de Mello e Souza, *O tupi e o alaúde: uma interpretação de Macunaima* (São Paulo: Duas Cidades, 1979); Telê Ancona Lopez, *Macunaima, a margem e o texto* (São Paulo: Hucitec, 1974); Eneida Maria de Souza, *A pedra mágica do discurso* (Belo Horizonte: Editora da UFMG, 1999); José Luiz Passos, *Ruínas de linhas puras: Quatro ensaios em torno a Macunaima* (Annablume: São Paulo, 1998). Recent historians have discussed the text as well: Devine Guzman, *Native and National*; Marc Hertzman, *Making Samba: A New History of Race and Music in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013). Ethnomusicologists working with Brazil have also dialogued with Andrade’s musical novel. See Alfredo Cesar Melo, “Macunaíma: entre a crítica e o elogio à transculturação,” *Hispanic Review* 78, no. 2 (2010): 205-227; James Melo, “Macunaíma out of the Woods: The intersection of Musicology and

chapter provides an original reading of a motif in the text, unanalyzed in the scholarly literature, and pertinent to the present discussion of totems. While Macunaíma clearly lacks the conscience necessary for him to have a sense of morality—even the novel’s subtitle reads “the hero with no character”—Andrade’s protagonist also possesses a dubious *mortality*. Macunaíma is presented as a totem through the experience of death and resurrection.

Throughout the text Macunaíma has several close encounters with death, and is actually killed and resurrected twice. In both cases, the hero’s resurrection is made possible by the use of peculiarly Brazilian magic. In the first case, Macunaíma is killed by his enemy Venceslau Pietro Pietra, who chops the hero up and puts him in a big pot of polenta. Maanape, the dead hero’s witchdoctor brother, finds a magical ant that sucks up Macunaíma’s blood. They sneak into the enemy’s house where the witchdoctor releases a smoke that knocks Venceslau unconscious. Maanape then spreads out the contents of the polenta pot on a giant banana leaf, has the ant pour out the hero’s blood, and they wrap him up into a giant *pamonha*, a Brazilian corn tamale. Stumbling out of the *pamonha* comes a weak and dizzy Macunaíma. He drinks some *guaraná*, a liquid Brazilian stimulant, allowing the group to make a quick getaway.⁵⁷

In the second case, a monkey tricks Macunaíma into killing himself, a specular scenario since the hero’s swindling behavior throughout the whole book is identical to

Ethnomusicology in Brazil,” *Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale*, 607-613; Suzel Ana Reily, “Macunaíma’s Music: National Identity and Ethnomusicological Research,” in *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994): 71-96. Finally, French sociologist Roger Bastide recorded his reactions to the text in Roger Bastide, “Macunaíma visto por um Francês,” trans. Maria José Carvalho, *Revista do Arquivo Municipal* 106, *Homenagem a Mário de Andrade* (Jan-Feb 1946).

⁵⁷ Andrade, *Macunaíma*, 56-9.

that of the monkey's. Macunaíma stumbles upon a monkey cracking open the fruit of the Babassu palm tree. When the hero asks what the monkey is eating, the monkey replies he is snacking on his own testicles. Macunaíma, never wanting to miss out on a new experience, goes down to the rocky road and cracks his own scrotum so hard that he dies. Brother Maanape finds Macunaíma, grabs two coconuts from the northeastern state of Bahia, ties them between the hero's legs, and then pumps Macunaíma full of guaraná and pipe smoke, reviving the deceased hero.⁵⁸

In the aforementioned article on the "Dramatic Dances," Andrade explained that a death-and-resurrection ceremony served as critical evidence that a given animal was a community's totem. In *Macunaíma*, Andrade accordingly played on the trope he had been studying. Akin to the examples given in Frazer's *Golden Bough*, Macunaíma did not simply die but was rather hunted. Like in the Bumba ceremonies, a European doctor never achieved the resuscitation; in each case, the family had to turn to primitive magic. For this reason, Andrade established brother Maanape as a *feitiçeiro*, or witchdoctor. The use of the term *feitiçeiro* instead of the Amerindian *pagé* suggests Maanape's Afro-roots, and the reader is indeed told that the witchdoctor is the only black-skinned brother of the three (the other two brothers had more-or-less successfully undergone a magical whitening process alluding to Brazil's attempt to "whiten" the nation through state-sponsored immigration). The reader never forgets Maanape's profession; every time his name is mentioned in the text, the next sentence always reads "Maanape was a witchdoctor." The phrase serves as constant reminder of the presence of the primitive in the Brazilian family.

⁵⁸ Andrade, *Macunaíma*, 146-8.

Also akin to the Bumba ceremony, the death-and-resurrection scenes in *Macunaíma* register the presence of smoke and Christian symbolism. Andrade had made a habit of highlighting references to smoke in his copies of the texts on the primitive mind. The marginalia suggests the Brazilian scholar viewed smoke as necessary for primitive ritual, serving to purify the community and consummate the offering.⁵⁹ Then, Andrade recognized the similarity between totemic ritual and the Christ story, writing “[The Bumba ceremony] portrays mystical primitive notions, visible in seasonal vegetable and animal rites, and its culminating, sublimated spiritualization in the death and resurrection of the Christian God.”⁶⁰ In other words, Andrade inverted EB Tylor’s argument that Christian monotheism was an evolved version of primitive religion; for Andrade, Brazil’s folkloric dancers only made symbolic allusions to the Christ figure to the extent that his death and resurrection fit in with their primitive need to act out fertility rites. This is fleshed out in *Macunaíma*’s first death, in which blood is shed and the dead hero is himself transubstantiated into communion food. Yet the Eucharist has been peculiarly Brazilianized: the dead hero is wrapped inside a giant Brazilian corn tamale and drinks blood-red guaraná.

For all the comparisons with other totemic representations, *Macunaíma* features one key contrast. In the penultimate chapter, the protagonist stumbled on an actual Bumba ceremony. Included in the novel were actual verses from Andrade’s folkloric research, inserted into the text at each stage of the ceremony. These include the

⁵⁹ Frazer, *L’Rameau D’or*, 598, Biblioteca de Mário de Andrade, IEB; Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (Paris: Librairie Feliz Alcan, 1928), 269, Biblioteca de Mário de Andrade, IEB.

⁶⁰ Andrade, *Danças Dramáticas*, 33.

presentation of the ox, the death, and the visit from the vultures.⁶¹ But there is no resurrection. Andrade left out the key moment of the totemic ritual. Andrade's artistic intervention was to leave the ox without life in order to highlight Macunaíma, the sloth, as the more vital totem of the text, and of the nation.

Scholars in Brazil have debated over the form of the novel. Andrade himself described *Macunaíma* as a rhapsody, a satire, and a comedy. Critics have tended to classify the work based on its structure (suite, variation, rhapsody) or for its recycled content (pastiche, bricolage) because of Andrade's creative weaving together of various sources, most heavily the Amerindian legends collected by German explorer and ethnologist Theodor Kock-Grunberg in *Vom Roroima zum Orinoco*. But in debating form, critics have overlooked one of its principle rhetorical strategies. Andrade's engagement with the oral storytelling form alongside his ribald treatment of earlier texts is none other than a case of 'signifyin'.

In 1988, literary critic Henry Louis Gates Jr. published *The Signifying Monkey*. The text asserted "signifyin'" served as a central trope in twentieth-century African-American literature.⁶² The term refers to the process of profanely playing off what has been previously said in order to transform the meaning of an earlier text. Signifyin' is characterized by the simultaneous use of intertextuality, subversion, and profane humor. These are the three techniques that Andrade engaged in *Macunaíma* and *Turista*

⁶¹ Andrade, *Macunaíma*, 195-8.

⁶² Henry Louis Gates Jr., *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

Aprendiz. While *Signifying Monkey* examined black writers in North America, Gates was clear that the trope was limited neither to blacks nor to North Americans.⁶³

Within black American culture there are a handful of well-known poems used to practice signifyin'. The artist, instead of simply reciting the poem, improvisationally rewrites the poem employing the profanity, parody, and personalization (changing names and adjectives to place members of the audience inside the story) characteristic of the trope. The best-known of these carries the title given to Gate's aforementioned book—namely, the “Signifying Monkey.” In the poem, a monkey in a tree tricks a bullying lion into picking a fight with an elephant, in which the lion gets mutilated. The poem itself features a bit of *mise-en-abyme*—the artistic reproduction of an image within that same image—in that both monkey and narrator are simultaneously signifyin': the monkey to the lion, and the narrator to the audience.

In *Macunaíma*, hero and author simultaneously signify as they walk through their respective worlds. Macunaíma is so profane that his pastime is collecting entries for a dictionary of swear words. Andrade, in turn, himself writes with the profanity of fecal matter and comic-book violence. Nearly as offensive for the linguistic purists of his time, Andrade abandoned proper Portuguese grammar and orthography, opting instead to transcribe vernacular Portuguese to the written page. In content, Andrade disrespected existing moral norms and, in written form, he rejected stylistic notions of what made for appropriate Brazilian literature.

Profanity in *Macunaíma* also takes the form of highly sexual content and, indeed, the now-revered rhapsody was originally denounced as pornographic. As a result of the

⁶³ Gates, *Signifying*, 99.

criticisms, Andrade, for the second edition, censured an entire section of the text discussing the sexual arts of the hero in his tropical hammock. While the whole bit may appear excessively carnivalesque (and allusions to Rabelais do appear in the text), viewing *Macunaíma* as a case of signifyin' accounts for the prolific sexuality of the book. Tropical determinism was a post-colonial framework condemning the tropics for their sexuality while propagating myths of exotic and available women for tourists. Just as important as Andrade's project of humorously redeeming laziness was his signifyin' on the discourse of an over-sexed Brazil. By producing a hero who only pushed past his immobilizing laziness to realize daily sexual encounters, Andrade reduced the tropicalist denunciations to idiocy. Simultaneously, Andrade was able to respond to the colonial judgment with an ever-erect phallus, giving the finger to colonial judgments while defending Brazil as incredibly potent.⁶⁴

The choice to craft Macunaíma as descendant of the sloth was also effective because the sloth is a close cousin to the monkey, already established as a trickster character in African folklore. As if that were not enough, the actual signifying monkey himself seems to appear on stage on the day of Macunaíma's second death. Sitting on the branch and chomping away on his Babassu fruit, the signifying monkey tricks the hero into killing himself; the signifying sloth gets out-signified.

How is it possible that the signifying monkey made his way into the classic book by the father of Brazilian modernism? Was Andrade intentional signifyin' on the signifying monkey? Absolutely. Legends of the trickster monkey were native not to the

⁶⁴ Aime Cesaire makes a similar intervention in his recrafting of *The Tempest*, in which the Afro-Brazilian Exú employs his erect phallus to defy and disrespect the European gods. Aime Cesaire, *The Tempest*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: TCG Translations, 2002).

United States, but to the slave coasts of Africa. Andrade learned about these stories through folkloric collections from North America and Angola. Central to the planning of *Macunaíma* was an 1894 text by Heli Chatelain called *Folk-Tales of Angola*. The collection of stories contained three legends that Andrade used as inspiration for his book, and two of these were about a trickster monkey.⁶⁵ In the more elaborate story, a mean Mr. Leopard wanted to catch Mr. Monkey. At the suggestion of the old medicine woman, Leopard created a female statue, covered it in tar, and placed it in a tree to catch the monkey. Mr. Monkey saw the woman in the tree, tried to woo her with food and song. But when he jumped to her, he found himself stuck to her, stomach to stomach. There, in the margin of his copy of the text, Andrade penciled the word “umbigada,” a term referring to the African belly-bump dance gesture symbolizing fertility. The folkstory ended with the trickster monkey getting free, initiating a full-out chase across the country. Andrade bracketed Chatelain’s explanatory note that tar and wax figures were present not only in Angolan and African-American legends, but also in Brazil. The comment no doubt made the author of *Macunaíma* more comfortable with using the story in his own novel. The Angolan tale came to form the narrative of *Macunaíma*’s sixth chapter, “Francis and the Giant.” The role of Mr. Leopard is played by the sloth’s enemy Pietro Pietra, who places a wax female in the tree to catch Macunaíma. The chase across Brazil ensues.

The stories recounted in the Chatelain text have three characteristics omnipresent in *Macunaíma*, evidence that Andrade was intentionally recreating African oral tradition

⁶⁵ Heli Chatelain, *Folk-Tales of Angola: Fifty Tales, with Ki-mbundu text, Literal English Translation, Introduction and Notes* (Boston: American Folklore Society, 1894), 95, 160-189. Biblioteca Mário de Andrade, IEB.

in his own novel. First, the text employs the short sentence structure so characteristic of the Chatelain text. Second, Andrade created a handful of phrases featuring strong rhythmic repetitions and placed them repeatedly throughout the chapters, mirroring the repeated adages of the oral stories. Finally, talking animals from the African jungle, such as the fire-ant, parrot, alligator, and monkey are ubiquitous in the Brazilian novel.

If Andrade did not immediately glean that the trickster monkey stories in Africa—and then North America—served as a coded criticism of people in power and systems of inequality, the Chatelain text made this explicit. Andrade highlighted a footnote attached to the story of the trickster monkey, in which Chatelain commented that “African negroes [expressed] in song...that which they would not dare to say in plain words. So the slaves on the plantation sing satires against their task-masters.” The African-American scholar further concluded that, left unchecked, slaves’ satires could “degenerate into fierce denunciations.”⁶⁶ The comment, alongside the broader legends, gave Andrade a clear idea of the purpose of the signifyin’ monkey stories and even a handful of classic examples with which to work.

Macunaíma himself also bears so much resemblance to the African mythical monkey simply because he is fashioned after the archetypal character of the trickster. While this is obvious throughout the whole text, Andrade made it explicit at the end of the text by turning Macunaíma into Saci-Pereré, the mythical trickster of the Tupi-Guaraní legends. Saci-Pereré was a forest-dwelling spirit that loved to smoke from a pipe. As a trickster, he made travelers choose the wrong path, scared wanderers with his whistle in the night, and was responsible for all sorts of domestic mishaps. As the legend

⁶⁶ Chatelain, *Folk-Tales*, 296. Biblioteca Mário de Andrade, IEB.

migrated to the Brazilian Northeast, Afro-Brazilians turned him into a spirit that lost a leg in a *capoeira* fight. Macunaíma, in the closing chapter of the book, himself loses a leg to a nasty bout with piranhas, and then climbs a magical vine into the sky. As he climbs, he visits the moon, the morning star, and then an old friend; all three sky-dwellers mistake Macunaíma for Saci-Pereré. This was not only because of his single leg, but also because each had witnessed or suffered from his deception throughout the novel.

Gates suggested the signifying monkey had its origins in the Yoruba divinity Exú, the short and dark-skinned African trickster sometimes depicted with a monkey's tale. Andrade, too, decided to baptize Macunaíma as a son of Exú. When the slothful hero went to Rio de Janeiro for an African religious ceremony—designated a *macumba*—it was Exú that visited the home and helped Macunaíma on his quest.⁶⁷ Exú had been one of two *orixás* (the name given to deities in Afro-Brazilian religions with roots in the Yoruba tradition) mentioned in a letter to Andrade describing Afro-Brazilian religious music in Rio de Janeiro. It was with this letter that Andrade crafted his chapter on the macumba. While Andrade's correspondent had explained Exú as more devil than mythological trickster, the devil himself is of course quite a trickster, and Andrade's intuition seems to have led him to choose the proper orixá for his young deviant.

While *Macunaíma* as a text is as deviant and subversive as its own protagonist, the work is not an outright rejection of colonial discourse. North American black writers

⁶⁷ Readers familiar with the difference between candomblé, umbanda, macumba and other Brazilian religious practices ought to know that Andrade himself was not completely aware of the differences in names. The event documented in *Macunaíma* refers to a *feira de candomblé* at the terreiro of Tia Ciata. Information regarding the event was provided in a letter to Andrade from the famous musician Pixinguinha, who himself referred to the event as a macumba. The letter is reproduced in Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria*, 154-6. The choice to include the ceremony in *Macunaíma* was somewhat of an afterthought, evidenced in a later letter from Andrade to Alceu Amoroso Lima.

historically used signifyin' to expose as foolish the belief that blacks were ignorant and inherently subservient. Andrade instead maintained the idea of a primitive nation, mocking only the assumption that primitivity condemned a nation to failure. This is why Andrade could ridicule tropical and racial determinism in *Macunaíma* and then, in the same year, publish an essay arguing that Brazilian laziness, primitivity, and sensuality had endowed the nation with a heightened musicality. This essay would serve as a handbook for Brazilian nationalist composers for the next twenty years, and specifically oriented the compositions commissioned by the DC&R throughout the 1930s.

Primitivism in Music

Andrade's 1928 *Essay on Brazilian Music* opens by preaching the importance of composing nationalist music and explaining how to do so. It was here that Andrade shifted his scale from individual to national modernist creation. Whereas Andrade had in 1922 suggested the poet needed to listen to the "telegram" inspiration from his unconscious and then use his own conscious mind to order the work, he now argued it was the nation that needed to pull inspiration from its collective unconscious and then designate professional composers to transform this into what would, in his mind, become high art:

A national art is already made in the unconscious of the people [*inconsciencia do povo*]. The artist has only to give to these pre-existing elements an erudite transition that will make popular music into artistic music...⁶⁸

Andrade believed this process would be more productive than the general nationalist formula in use up to that point—constructing symphonies atop folkloric melodies. In

⁶⁸ Andrade, *Ensaio*, 16.

practice, the difference was slight, but for Andrade, it was a matter of great importance. He believed directly lifting folkloric melodies and stereotypical rhythms “fatigues [the listener] and easily becomes banal.” Instead, Andrade called upon artists to enter an artistic phase of “national unconsciousness” in which artists sought to understand their nation’s “racial psychology” and translated it into compositions.

In the rest of the essay, Andrade provides an outline and many examples of how Brazil’s racial psychology had manifested itself in general musical principles.⁶⁹ This included the presence of Brazil’s totem and primitive magic, not in lyrics, but rather actually in the structure and function of Brazilian music. In a particularly revealing case, the essay suggested syncopation—the placement of musical accents on off-beats—served as a central identifying characteristic of Brazilian rhythm. According to the essay, Brazil’s syncopation came from the nation’s prosody, the rhythm of everyday speech. Instead of staying on a consistent beat, Brazilians tended to lag as they spoke. In English, the technique, when applied to singing, is called “vocal back phrasing” and refers to the singer’s stylistic singing behind the beat: she pronounces her words just slightly later than they theoretically should be articulated, resulting in a tension with the rest of the music. Andrade claimed that, in contrast to the international tendency to catch back up to the beat, a Brazilian singer would instead fall fully behind an entire beat in order to be back in step. Instead of considering this musical styling for its aesthetic purposes, Andrade claimed this came from Brazilian fatigue. In other words, Brazilian rhythm was rooted in

⁶⁹ In Andrade, *Ensaio*, 124, 166, Andrade argues that certain melodic patterns repeat throughout all of Brazilian music regardless of the number of melodies invented and then forgotten. While Andrade had not read Carl Jung, the argument of musical motifs bears resemblance to Jung’s explanation of archetypes.

the nation's laziness.⁷⁰ Andrade continued to employ a primitivist hermeneutics to the melody, rhythm, and harmonies of popular Brazilian music, returning once more to the motif of laziness in his analysis of pronunciation: "In the singing of Northeasterners," he argued, there was a "peculiar legacy (also appearing in the voice of the rural guitar players) of a glissando so slothful that for a while I imagined Northeasterners [*nordestinos*] utilized a quarter-tone [scale]."⁷¹ Here even glissandos, slides in pitch from one note into the other, were read as born of primitive fatigue. The subjects of the remark (the *nordestino*, the rural guitarist) are one of many signs that Brazilian primitivism, while tacitly accepted as a national phenomenon, was taken as more pronounced in certain regions, specifically in rural areas and cities with high Afro-descendant populations. Not only does the regional discourse speak to Andrade's belief in the close relationship between Africa and primitivity, it also reveals his acceptance of the idea that immigration and education had pushed São Paulo further in the evolutionary process.

Hoping to study the nation's primitive mentality more closely, Andrade left São Paulo at the end of 1928 to spend four months traveling across Brazil's Northeastern states. Outside of the city of Natal, Andrade found a practitioner of the syncretic religious practice called *Catimbó* and paid for a *fechamento do corpo*, or body-closing ceremony designed to protect the supplicant from physical and spiritual harm. The experience convinced Andrade that Brazil's primitive mentality could be read through methods

⁷⁰ Andrade suggested this was most evident in the Brazilian Northeast, invoking a regionalist and racialized discourse suggesting the region was lazier than São Paulo because of its larger Afro-Brazilian demographic. Andrade, *Ensaio*, 36, 57, 140.

⁷¹ "No canto nordestino tem...o ligado peculiar (tambem aparecendo na voz dos violeiros do centro) dum glissando tão preguiça que cheguei um tempo a imaginar que os nordestinos empregavam o quarto-de-tom." Andrade, *Ensaio*, 57.

borrowed from Freud. In other words, he concluded that Brazil's "national unconscious" could be psychoanalyzed.

Andrade presented his findings in a 1933 lecture to the Brazilian Association of Music.⁷² In the lecture, Andrade recounted his *Catimbó* experience in a narrative reproducing Freud's description of the psychoanalytic session in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.⁷³ The implication was that the Afro-Brazilian religious ceremony could be seen as the Brazilian equivalent to psychoanalysis, but with two variations. First, the unconscious was accessed not through dreams, but through music. Second, instead of releasing the personal unconscious, the Brazilian ceremony opened the gateway to Brazil's national unconscious.

The narrative carefully followed the procedure outlined by Freud. Catimbó priest Mestre Manuel played the role of the psychotherapist. He led Andrade into a poorly-lit room, and directed him to lie down, as if for analysis.⁷⁴ Mestre Manuel then used a maracá to create a "dizzying" music putting Andrade into the near-hypnotic state necessary for psychoanalysis. Andrade commented, "I gradually abandoned my intellectual forces."⁷⁵ He then digressed into a larger discussion of how Afro-Brazilian rhythms worked to overpower the listener's critical faculties. Musical devices, such as syncopation built around a central pulse, relaxed the physical posture of the listener and

⁷² Mário de Andrade, "Música de Feitiçaria no Brasil" in Mário de Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria no Brasil*, ed. by Oneyda Alvarenga (Belo Horizonte: Itatiaia, 1983).

⁷³ Freud, *Interpretation*, in *Basic Writings*, 160.

⁷⁴ Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria*, 33; compare with the method of Freudian therapy as outlined in Freud, *Interpretation*, in *Basic Writings*, 160.

⁷⁵ "O ritmo desse refrão, a monotonia das cantigas molengas, o chique-chique suave do maracá, já principiavam a me embalar, a música me extasiava. Aos poucos meu corpo se aquecia numa entorpecedora musicalidade ao mesmo tempo que gradativamente me abandonavam as forças de reação intelectual." Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria*, 37.

loosened the inhibitions of the ego. He explained: “It is precisely this that makes music the key companion of fetishism: its hypnotic force.”⁷⁶ In addition to its hypnotic force, music further induced fatigue, wearing down the ego and its censorship. Andrade wrote: “[The music] is a narcotic, an anesthetizing, intoxicating substance that provokes, in addition to fatigue, temporary, maybe even permanent, depletion, oh what slothfulness!”⁷⁷ In the string of adjectives, replete with decelerating half stops, Andrade literarily reproduced his own transition into the trance. At the end, Andrade stepped into his unconscious. What came out was his own Brazilian totem, the sloth, invoked by quoting Macunaíma’s favorite catchphrase.

Methods from primitivist anthropology stood alongside psychoanalysis in Andrade’s attempt to understand Brazil’s primitive mentality. He interpreted the rest of the ceremony and its implications on the Brazilian nation through recourse to the ideas of Frazer and Tylor. Frazer’s principle of imitative magic allowed Andrade to venture a hermeneutics of the body-closing ceremony. The ceremony leader had dripped wax on Andrade’s hands, which Andrade read as imitative magic designed to clean the body by making it “suffer a light burning of the purgatorial fires that would purify everything.”⁷⁸

Andrade also used the work of the primitivists to interpret the experience of spirit possession. In *Primitive Cultures*, Tylor had suggested spirit-possession in primitive

⁷⁶ “E esse é justamente o destino principal da música que a torna companeira inseparável da feitiçaria: a sua força hipnótica.” Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria*, 37.

⁷⁷ “É um estupefaciente, um elemento de insensibilização e bebedice que provoca, além de fadiga, uma consunção temporânea, e talvez da vida inteira, ai que preguiça!” Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria*, 43.

⁷⁸ Mário de Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria*, 55.

societies functioned through self-induced trances via fasting, dancing, and music.⁷⁹

Andrade only had to go slightly further to find the significance of the spirits appearing after the trance was induced. One answer came in the form of a quote by German anthropologist George Tschubinow that Andrade highlighted on his research index cards: “Everything repressed from the stream of the conscious mind is perceived as action of demonic forces invading human life to either harm or help.”⁸⁰ This may have been reinforced by Andrade’s reading of *Totem and Taboo*, in which Freud wrote, “It might be said that in the last analysis the ‘spirit’ of persons or things comes down to their capacity to be remembered and imagined after perception of them has ceased.”⁸¹ The key difference was this: Andrade saw the divine entities appearing in the religious ceremonies not as manifestations of a priest’s unconscious, but rather as appearances of Brazil’s national unconscious.

In sum, Andrade had synthesized the ideas of the primitivist anthropologists with those of Sigmund Freud in order to arrive at a methodology for access Brazil’s “primitive mind” and national unconscious. From the anthropologists, Andrade accepted that values, community, and worldview were made manifest in states of possession, rituals, taboos, and totems. From Freud, Andrade lifted the idea that the unconscious itself could be

⁷⁹ Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. 2, 123-135. Tylor’s influence is also evident in Andrade’s decision to borrow Tylor’s spirital hierarchy moving from animism to Catholicism. Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria*, 23-32.

⁸⁰ “todo represamento da corrente da consciência são pela imaginação concebidos como ação de forças demoníacas que invadem a vida humana de modo ora hostil ora adjutório.” Andrade, *Música de Feitiçaria*, 145. Liddy Mignone and Antonio Sa Pereira, professors and reformers of music education in São Paulo and throughout Brazil, translated the German for Andrade.

⁸¹ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans. by James Strachey (London: Routledge, 2001), 109. This Freudian understanding went hand-in-hand with fears that new technologies would eradicate the old practices. For Andrade, the recording of the “mestres” and “orixas” would ensure Brazil’s unconscious was not completely lost. He likely believed that losing the Afro-Brazilian deities would mean the lost opportunity for scholars to research the manifestations of the nation’s primitive unconscious.

“read” through analyzing what happened during states of possession—possession taking the place of hypnosis and the dream—and by paying careful attention to language. The invitation to lead the DC&R made it possible for the modernist poet to train an entire group of scholars willing to investigate the nation’s primitive psychology.

The institutional project would allow not only scholarship but also the collection of artifacts from across the nation. Andrade imagined that the resulting repository would facilitate the creation of national modern art and music in accordance to the model laid out in the 1928 *Essay*. Each sculpture, artifact, and recorded song could be a “telegram,” a piece of inspiration straight from Brazil’s collective unconscious. Conscious critics—urban, educated elite—could then edit these with an eye for beauty and form, turning local folkloric expressions of the primitive self into artistic expression of universal value. Stepping into his new position as department director, Andrade began to train a team of researchers to collect, catalogue, and report on everything from totems to taboos across the nation.

Investigating Brazil’s Primitive Unconscious

The 1936 ethnography course came with the assignment of writing a report based on original research. Andrade and Dina Levi-Strauss further invited the students to continue their research beyond the six-month course in order to have their work published in the department’s scholarly journal or even as a monograph. Students worked on projects exploring primitivity within Brazilian culture and thought.

The work of this cohort matters first because it demonstrates that an entire community of scholars in São Paulo accepted the premise of a national psychology.

Andrade had applied scientific methods to a project of nation-building, making national identity appear as an essence to be scientifically discovered rather than an idea that was socially constructed. Through the ethnography course, Andrade passed this framework to the next generation of scholars. This also meant the spread of the discourse of Brazilian primitivity. The young ethnographers accepted their nation as primitive, appreciating both the artistic sensibility it supposedly brought the nation and the sense of superiority it gave them as white, elite students in São Paulo.

Students felt free to choose between psychoanalysis and primitivist anthropology in their choice of methodologies and interpretive frameworks. Ethnography graduate Oneyda Alvarenga, who also served as head of the DC&R Music Library conceived a psychoanalytic project on the national musical imagination. Alvarenga sent out letters to important composers, poets, writers, and artists across Brazil. Akin to psychoanalytic practices of dream telling and free association, Alvarenga asked the composers to freely share memories and images motivating them to create art.⁸² While Alvarenga never published the results—she was dissatisfied with the responses—she continued to research and publish in accordance with the national psychology method. Among the more interesting of her works was a thesis providing a primitivist account of the origins of music and then outlining what she referred to as “musical psychopathologies.”⁸³

Dalmo Belfort de Mattos instead chose to examine superstition and religious practice from a Frazerian perspective. His study “Ethnography and the Cross” examined

⁸² Andrade-Alvarenga, *Cartas*, 77-95.

⁸³ Oneyda Alvarenga, *A Linguagem Musical*, 1933. Reproduced in entirety in Luciana Barongeno, “Ainda sinto umas cócegas de explicar certas coisas: Mário de Andrade, professor de Oneyda Alvarenga” (PhD Diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2014), 82-115.

the roots and meaning of the use of the cross or its sign during daily life throughout the state of São Paulo. Belfort concluded that Brazilians made the sign of the cross as a curative or protective gesture. Those who practiced the ritual believed that the sign of the cross could stave off an evil eye or even keep food from rotting.⁸⁴ Belfort interpreted the practice through Frazer's concept of imitative magic. Just as Christ on the cross had cured spiritual malaise and made resurrection a possibility, so too, the Brazilians believed the sign of the cross could cure physical ailments and bring extended life to family, friends, or even a bowl of food.

Ethnography student Luís Saia led the DC&R's most impressive research endeavor. Baptized the "Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas" (Mission of Folkloric Research), the project aimed to document the myriad cultural manifestations of the Northeastern region of Brazil. Four department workers spent six months traversing the states of Pernambuco, Paraíba, Ceará, Piauí, Maranhão, and Pará. The team carried with them more than a hundred acetate discs and even a motion-picture camera to record religious ceremonies and film Brazil's dramatic dances. The group focused three projects documenting primitive psychology: ex-votos, religious ceremonies, and totems. The theoretical aspect of these three projects is examined here, while questions of methods, ethics, and consequences of the trip are addressed in Chapter 4.

During the trip, Luis Saia paid special attention to ex-votos. Traditionally, ex-votos are Catholic offerings given to complete a promise to God. In Brazil, however, they tend to be wooden sculptures presented to the church in supplication for healing. Those

⁸⁴ Dalmo Belfort de Mattos, "A etnografia e a cruz," *Boletim da Sociedade de Etnografia e Folclore* no. 4 (January 1938). SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP.

fashioned in the shape of a body part represent the limb the infirm needs healed. If shaped as a head, the offering represents the request for protection of the whole body, or instead serves as a prayer for a deceased loved one. The common nickname of these sculptures—*milagres* (miracles)—attests to the hopes of those furnishing the offerings.

Returning from the Northeast, Saia published his research on the ex-votos in a short book called *Escultura Popular Brasileira* (Brazilian Popular Sculpture).⁸⁵ In line with his training, the ethnographer offered a reading of the sculptures based on the ideas of primitive anthropology. The book's bibliography cited only Frazer, Freud, and anthropologist Lucien Levy-Bruhl, underlining their centrality in the education of the ethnographers. Saia argued that Catholic tradition was insufficient in explaining the cultural practice of giving milagres. At its root, he asserted, the tradition “also and especially [featured] a strong influence of primitive notions brought to the Northeast by the black African and Indian.”⁸⁶

The ethnographer fashioned his own explanation. Primitive tribes of Brazil's past, lacking germ and disease theories, personified death to account for the passing on of members in the community. Members searched for gifts to propitiate “the daemon Death.”⁸⁷ Recognizing the martial nature of the force taking life away, the primitives imagined that hanging heads as trophies on Death's altar would make him feel like a fierce warrior, satiating his thirst for killing.⁸⁸ So they fashioned heads of wood, and

⁸⁵ Luiz Saia, *Escultura Popular Brasileira* (Edições Gaveta: São Paulo, 1944).

⁸⁶ “mas também e sobretudo uma forte influência das noções primitivas trazidas para a comunidade nordestina pelo afronegro e pelo índio,” Saia, *Escultura*, 12.

⁸⁷ “a morte-daimônio,” Saia, *Escultura*, 11.

⁸⁸ Saia, *Escultura*, 11.

placed them at any location in which death had already left its mark: the sight of an accident, the bank of a river, and—with the arrival of the Catholic church and its burial practices—the church altar.⁸⁹

Saia shipped over a hundred wooden sculptures back to São Paulo, where he hoped they would come to form part of a museum run by the DC&R. Since department funding was cut in the midst of the folkloric mission, the museum never developed beyond a few shelves of materials visible to those visiting the offices. Nonetheless, Saia maintained his hope that the collection would help later artistic activity in São Paulo. He photographed the wooden heads he believed best highlighted primitivist aesthetics, published the photos with his monograph, and included a brief analysis of their key artistic traits.⁹⁰

In his description of the ex-voto sculptures, Saia echoed Andrade's thesis that primitives used music and the arts primarily for education and socialization. Saia argued that the ex-voto sculptures were rudimentary not because primitives lacked artistic ability but because they prioritized art's social utility over individual virtuosity. "The primitive avoids naturalism," he wrote, "not as a result of a lack of anatomic understanding or technical inability in the plastic arts, but because the functionality of his art takes him a different direction."⁹¹ The rest of the analysis included a taxonomy of Northeastern approaches to shaping sculptures of heads, ostensibly to let readers know what sculptural forms constitute a Brazilian style. The taxonomy serves as additional evidence that Saia

⁸⁹ Saia, *Escultura*, 10-15.

⁹⁰ Saia, *Escultura*, 18-19.

⁹¹ Saia, *Escultura*, 17.

had a solid understanding of Andrade's broader goals. Not only did scholars need to collect religious ornaments to help social scientists understand the national psychology. They also needed to collect artisan work in order to provide elite artists with inspiration and instruction that would lead to the creation of high art with national roots.

The ex-voto collection served as a side-project to the folkloric mission's larger aim of recording music. The recording sessions brought opportunities for other notes to be taken about performers, costumes, instruments, and even dances. In interviewing singers, the researchers paid regular attention to questions of social psychology. In field books, the ethnographers made a point to note the "psychology of the informant." Each detail recorded—name, age, skin color, travel experience, and place of birth—mattered to the department scholars. The length of a name spoke of the person's social class and heritage. Age gave a loose indication of how long certain tunes had been around. The noting of skin color suggests the scholars may have hoped to connect songs or genres racial heritage. Travel experience and town of birth placed geographic parameters on song origins. Informants that had never traveled were more likely to sing songs autochthonous to the town where the research was conducted.

The ethnographers did not limit their psychological taxonomy to the earthly informants; they also noted the psychology of the deities paying a visit during the ritual. While Saia's field book notations were rather disorganized, fellow student Oneyda Alvarenga later published Saia's notes in ordered volumes. In the volume on the Catimbó sessions, Alvarenga created a group biography of the visiting spirits. For each deity,

Alvarenga noted the following categories: name; skin color; musical instrument; material given (food, drink, and drugs); and anthropomorphic behavior.⁹²

The São Paulo scholars observed that many Afro-Brazilian religious communities were in danger of extinction because of poverty, police repression, and even migration. The ethnographers further recognized that the disappearance of any religious practice would mean the permanent loss of the visiting spirits. Alvarenga wrote, “The divinities from this Catimbó are, in light of the available information, in the same precarious situation” as the others visited by the folkloric mission.⁹³

The scholars believed that the recordings would allow social scientists to continue research on the national psychology long after these religious communities became extinct. When Saia returned from the trip, a newspaper reporter asked him, “From the point of view of a Paulista [native of the state of São Paulo], what is the value of the collected material?” Saia’s prolix answer merits the extended quotation below, because of how fully it re-articulates Andrade’s modernist project of using national psychology for scholarship and artistic production:

This documentation, which concerns popular arts and crafts of the Brazilian regions that indisputably constitute the zone most purely conserving the characteristics of our traditional formation, provide indispensable details and facts in the study of those residues seen here, in the south, only in consequences...If the purest aspects of the [Northeastern] customs disappear...from policing, social, or economic causes...the psychology of the southern population [*povo sulista*] can be explained, studied, and evidenced through working with material that appears to belong to other regions. We collected things that are viewed as traditionally Northeastern, but ought to be studied foremost as material speaking to our psychological and artistic formation.”

⁹² Oneyda Alvarenga, ed, *Catimbó: Registros Sonoros de Folclore Musical Brasileiro*, vol 3 (São Paulo: Discoteca Publica Municipal, 1949), 83-92.

⁹³ Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 98.

Saia began by stating that the collected arts and crafts—by which he meant drums, ex-votos, Afro-Brazilian religious accouterments, and music—would serve for study of Brazil’s “traditional formation.” Indeed, Saia and other scholars used the information to defend Brazil’s primitive heritage. The response to the journalist also invokes the idea that Brazil’s southern population was more culturally evolved (in the vein of EB Tylor’s model of cultural evolution) than the Northeast. Historians such as Stanley Blake and Barbara Weinstein have shown that this was a commonly held belief still being socially constructed in this period.⁹⁴ Saia finally suggested the work was important because of the impending destruction or extinction of Northeastern primitive culture. The ethnographers had worked for the salvation of endangered materials (revealing why the 1938 research trip was referred to as a “mission” and Saia as a “missionary”) which would allow artists and scholars to still have access to Brazil’s “psychological and artistic formation.” Each element of Saia’s response suggests he had a good grasp of both the psychological and aesthetic aspects of Andrade’s project.

Finally, the 1938 mission conducted a handful of recordings on the subject of Brazil’s totemic ox. The team took video footage of the roping of a steer, filmed segments of the Bumba ceremony, and recorded *aboios*, melodies sung to aid in the process of herding cattle. Since the studies were not the focal point of the folkloric trip, no publications or analyses resulted from the recordings. The only published totemic analysis came from student Sebastião Almeida Oliveira. His essay, “Proverbios e afins nos dominios da fauna,” (Proverbs and the Like Pertaining to Fauna) compiled a list of

⁹⁴ Stanley Blake, *The Vigorous Core of Our Nationality: Race and Regional Identity in Northeastern Brazil* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011); Weinstein, *Colors of Modernity*.

popular Portuguese aphorisms referring to animals. Oliveira attempted to show that the proverbial phrases served as a mechanism to strengthen the relationship between totems and national values.⁹⁵

The Society of Ethnography and Folklore—which organized and administered the DC&R’s ethnography projects—conducted a collective project to survey dance, superstitions, and taboos in the state of São Paulo. They printed out more than eight hundred questionnaires, and sent the survey to almost 250 localities. The instructions asked that answers be provided by local authorities, professors, and/or other knowledgeable residents in the community.⁹⁶ In addition to asking about regional dances and superstitions, the questionnaire featured a section dedicated to alimentary taboos. The questions included:

Are there food prohibitions like ‘milk with mango,’ etc? Give the reason for these prohibitions. Are there foods seen as incompatible in certain states or situations (pregnant woman, girl in puberty, etc)? Indicate all ideas, notions, beliefs, customs, superstitions, ceremonies or peculiar rituals, formulas, legends, etc, pertaining to alimentation.⁹⁷

The rationale for turning to food taboos may have also come from Frazer’s *Golden Bough*. The Scottish anthropologist had suggested the fear of contagious magic was present at the dinner table since ideas of contagion mingled easily with the act of consumption. Uneaten leftovers could be stolen by enemies for spells, while imprudent

⁹⁵ Sebastião Almeida Oliveira. “Proverbios e afins nos domínios da fauna,” (São Paulo: *Revista Arquivo Municipal*, vol 18, 1935): 182-194. Oliveira could not have been the only person thinking about totems, as we see that Andrade had also encouraged Oneyda Alvarenga to read Frazer’s section on totems. Andrade-Alvarenga, *Cartas*, 77.

⁹⁶ Survey questionnaires and results can be found on the SEF microfilm, rolls 1-6, CCSP. Roll 1 includes the ethnography course lecture notes, the SEF journal bulletins, and survey findings. Rolls 2-6 feature the survey sheets from across the state.

⁹⁷ Questions printed in “Instruções Folclóricas, parte ii,” *Boletim da Sociedade de Etnografia e Folclore*, (October-March 1937-8), SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP.

ingestion of unhealthy foods could result in physical or spiritual contamination.⁹⁸ Food taboos enforced throughout entire communities suggested consensus among the community regarding what physical nutrients or spiritual forces were unwelcome in the body. Andrade and the ethnographic society may have hoped that discovering alimentary taboos would reveal the elements rejected by the community, in turn further tracing its primitive identity. The ethnographic team subsequently charted the answers on multiple maps of the state of São Paulo. Proud of the project, Andrade used government funds to send two of the DC&R's division leaders to present the project at a 1937 National Exposition in Paris.⁹⁹

When the questionnaires were mailed back to the city of São Paulo, the ethnographic team found that the most common food taboos included the mixing of: fish with red meat, tropical fruits with alcohol, and fruit with milk.¹⁰⁰ Informants wrote comments such as “Among the most feared alimentary poison is milk with peach...Milk with peach spells certain death.”¹⁰¹ As with many other cases, neither Andrade nor the ethnography students engaged in the analytical work that could have followed. The students did not reflect on the implications of a culture that, with regards to flesh, refused to simultaneously consume land and sea. Nor did they explore the possibility that tropical fruit fears suggested the extent of internalization of scientific condemnations of the tropics.

⁹⁸ Frazer, *Golden Bough*, ch 19, 21.

⁹⁹ 24 May, 1937, DC, caixa 78, AHSP.

¹⁰⁰ SEF microfilm, roll 1. CCSP.

¹⁰¹ Liberato Mesquita to Mário de Andrade, no date. MA-CUL-180, Carta, Departamento de Cultura, Documentação Profissional, Fundo Mário de Andrade; IEB.

The ethnographic students shared the belief that Brazil possessed a primitive heritage evidenced in totemic dances, taboos, and religious artifacts. This gave rise to the variety of research projects including the survey on food prohibitions, the studies of national animals, and the recording of religious spirits. The publications of the scholars were generally limited to an exposition of the given cultural practice followed by a Frazerian hermeneutics. They did not address the efficacy of the superstitious actions, the social meaning of offerings, or the inherent danger of mixing milk with peaches. The fact that the scholars were even willing to invent alternative etiologies to fit their nation into the primitivist paradigm suggests they were actively working to embrace a colonial framework because of the place of power it provided them as scholars in São Paulo. Their modernist teacher, Mário de Andrade, had also been quite active in debating, searching, and adapting foreign ideas; but, like the students, he stayed firmly grounded in colonial hierarchies.

Conclusions

Andrade was a discriminant consumer of European ideas, and demonstrated an extraordinary ability to invent, translate, and parody ideas both foreign and local. Instead of limiting his reading to the French authors in vogue in São Paulo's intellectual circles, he read widely and eclectically. He then learned to read English and German to engage ideas from all over the globe. He read critically and demonstrated his ability to invert and parody colonial condemnations. This was most evident in *Macunaíma*, with its parodies of racial whitening and tropical determinism. Through his scholarship and writing,

Andrade reached a level of intellectual authority enabling him to choose which ideas to engage and how.¹⁰²

In his engagement with the psychologists, Andrade took concepts beyond what Freud and Ribot had themselves written about. He gave psychoanalytic interpretations of songs and religious ceremonies, and explored the relationship between music and consciousness. The scholar went further than primitivist anthropologists Tylor and Frazer to the extent that he integrated his ideas with fieldwork; the British and Scottish scholars instead drew their conclusions from colonial documents and travel literature. In sum, in his academic formation, Andrade selectively drew from a wide range of European ideas and then pushed beyond them, adding his own concepts, theories, and practices. But by the late 1920s, Andrade had become increasingly committed to viewing his nation through the eyes of Europe's primitivist anthropologists and psychologists.

Andrade had multiple reasons to accept that Brazil was born in primitivity. The scholar, alongside his modernist and political cohort, had been profoundly marked by living through the violence of the 1924 and 1932 revolts in São Paulo, in addition to their reading about World War I, and then of the failures of democracy in the 1930s. The international and civil wars in Europe challenged elites across Latin America to reconsider if European civilization was still an enviable quality. Primitive society, which appeared to be marked by tribal unity, seemed to offer helpful lessons to nations on both sides of the Atlantic.

¹⁰² While Viotti da Costa is absolutely right to suggest all Brazilian elites were in a position to selectively choose which European ideas they engaged, Andrade no doubt had a wider selection of ideas with which to work because of his language abilities and dedication to scholarship. Viotti da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 239.

Next, Andrade recognized that Tylor's cultural evolution scheme placed the state of São Paulo on a higher level of development than most of the rest of Brazil. This was an idea that not only São Paulo's scholars, but also its political leaders, rallied behind.¹⁰³ Finally, the fact that Tylor's evolutionary framework and Frazer's hermeneutics of magical ritual were not widespread through Brazil gave Andrade the opportunity to use the primitivist framework to publish his own work and gain recognition as a scholar. His students would follow suit, excited to be advancing the production of scientific knowledge. They had been taught that Brazil offered the chance for the field practice necessary to confirm ideas set forth by European anthropologists who lacked access to primary-source evidence.¹⁰⁴ In other words, the São Paulo scholars envisioned themselves as taking part in an Atlantic project that ranked societies and purported to chart cultural evolution.

Andrade and his students nuanced the primitivity paradigm by arguing that superstitious anxieties, religious rites, and periods of idleness engendered rich cultural celebrations, distinct musicality, and a propensity to excel in the arts. Andrade, in particular, also suggested that a primitive people could still be highly responsive to education projects as long as these were paternalist and employed the arts. Yet these claims did not undermine the broader project's endeavor to reinforce hierarchies of

¹⁰³ This argument lends additional evidence to Stanley Blake and Barbara Weinstein's argument that the identity of the Brazilian Northeasterner has been a social, political, and cultural construction established in contrast to the country's economic and political hubs. Blake, *Vigorous Core*, Weinstein, *Color of Modernity*. These authors join larger conversations recognizing the importance of heterogeneity in the construction of national identity. See, for example, Peter Wade, *Music, Race, Nation: Musica Tropicalia in Colombia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

¹⁰⁴ Dina Levi-Strauss, *Instruções práticas para pesquisas de antropologia física e cultural*, vol 1 (São Paulo: Departamento de Cultura, 1936), 15; Claude Levi-Strauss, "Em Prol de um instituto de Antropologia física e cultural," *Revista do Arquivo Municipal* 18 (Nov-Dec 1935), 247-257.

region, race, and class. The ethnographers used scholarly production to naturalize difference through scientific discourse. Composers working for the DC&R, in turn, naturalized difference through sound.

CHAPTER IV

Ethnographic (Mis)Encounters: The Search for a Primitive Mentality in Northeastern Brazil

Introduction

In February 1938, São Paulo's Department of Culture and Recreation supplied a group of ethnographers with field books, blank acetate discs, and a portable recording studio. The group embarked on a six-month tour of the Brazil's North and Northeast regions to investigate and record folkloric and religious music—particularly three Afro-Brazilian religions referred to as *Xangô*, *Tambor-de-Crioulo*, and *Babassue*. They were also anxious to document the syncretic *Catimbó*, which blends Afro-Brazilian, indigenous, and Catholic beliefs. Yet in most cities visited by the scholars, local authorities had prohibited the four religious practices. As a result, local religious leaders shut their doors to the ethnographers. Rather than giving up, the researchers reached out to local contacts, offered cash rewards to performers, and worked with local governments to get explicit permission to record the ceremonies for scholarly purposes. Over the next six months, the team recorded informants who claimed any degree of knowledge regarding the religious practices.

The daily experiences of the ethnographers on the 1938 “Mission of Folkloric Research” have been documented in masters theses, scholarly articles, and in the work of the scholars at the University of São Paulo's Institute for Brazilian Studies (*Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros*).¹ Yet scholars have refrained from analyzing the actual ethnographic

¹ Álvaro Carlini, “Cante lá que gravam cá: Mário de Andrade e a Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas de 1938” (master's thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 1994); Álvaro Carlini, *Cachimbo e maracá: o catimbó da Missão (1938)* (São Paulo: Centro Cultural São Paulo, 1993); Álvaro Carlini, “A viagem na viagem:

production: the field books, the sculptures and musical instruments collected, and the recordings themselves. The entries are scattered across the fifteen field books and have no chronological order; it appears the ethnographers would grab whatever notebook they had on hand and simply open to a blank page. The sculptures and instruments are tucked away in storage in São Paulo's Cultural Center, only coming out for occasional museum exhibits. Analyzing the recordings of the religious rituals presents a further challenge in light of Afro-Brazilian religious scholar Roger Bastide's caution that the recordings provide an unreliable depiction of the religious practices.²

On a methodological level, this chapter aspires to demonstrate critical and productive engagement with the materials. It also explains the methods, intentions, and assumptions of the ethnographers that serve as requisite context to reading the documents and listening to the records. Finally, through a careful reading of the sources surrounding the religious encounters, the chapter argues that not all of the 1938 ethnographic encounters were with practicing religious leaders. In some cases, the mission recorded informants posing as spiritual leaders. In others, singers were candid regarding their limited knowledge of the given sect, and the ethnographers worked with them anyway. In

Maestro Martin Braunwieser na Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas do Departamento de Cultura de São Paulo (1938): *Diário e correspondência à família*, (São Paulo, 1998); Álvaro Carlini, "Sessenta anos da Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas (1938–98): Conversas com Martin Braunwieser," *Anais do II Simpósio Latino-Americano de Musicologia* (Curitiba: Fundação Cultural de Curitiba, 1999); Fernando Giobellina Brumana, "Une ethnographie ratée. Le modernisme brésilien, le département de Culture de São Paulo et la Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas," *Gradhiva* 7 (2008): 71-83; Antonio Gilberto Ramos Nogueira, *Por um inventário dos sentidos: Mário de Andrade e a concepção de patrimônio e inventário* (São Paulo: Hucitec, FAPESP, 2005); Suzel Ana Reily, "Macunaíma's Music: National Identity and Ethnomusicological Research," in *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, ed. by Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994): 71-96; Flávia Camargo Toni, "Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas do Departamento de Cultura," Divisão de Difusão Cultural, n.d.; Elizabeth Travassos, *Os mandarins milagrosos. Arte e etnografia em Mário de Andrade e Béla Bartók* (Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, Jorge Zahar Editor, 1997).

² Roger Bastide, *The African Religions of Brazil: Toward a Sociology of the Interpenetration of Civilizations*, trans. Helen Sebba (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007 [1960]): 190-200.

other words, the historic record of the research trip does not provide a reliable portrayal of the work of religious practitioners in the Brazilian North and Northeast in the 1930s.

The documents do, however, provide insight into the methods and ethics of the ethnographic branch of the DC&R. Trained by the department's Society of Ethnography & Folklore, the researchers learned to view Northeasterners as characterized by a primitive mentality. Furthermore, explored below, the course promoted methodologies with questionable ethics, even by 1930s social science standards. When the ethnographers undertook their research, they in turn transgressed cultural boundaries and ignored requests for privacy. During recording sessions, the ethnographers interpreted mistakes made by improvising performers as evidence of an underdeveloped mentality. In sum, while the records of the mission may not afford entirely reliable and unbiased data, they do testify to the regional and racial prejudices present in São Paulo's social science scholarship in the period.

Recognizing that many of the 1938 religious informants were paid performers rather than practicing religious leaders does not void the ethnographic value of the musical recordings. On the contrary, the documents serve as a valuable testimony to what local laypeople knew about religions such as Catimbó. Priests did not hold a monopoly over theology and practice. Rather, the larger community shared a practical, albeit perhaps limited, understanding of rites and religious music. Paid to conduct convincing ceremonies, the 1938 performers cycled through a repertoire of religious phrases mixed with superstitious gestures. What is more, even though they were not musicians, there is evidence that the informants enhanced their shows by drawing from performance practices rooted in Northeastern popular musical traditions. Read as such, the

ethnographic records provide a broad survey of those aspects of music, theology, and ceremony registered in Northeastern collective memory. Following the discussion of training and ethics, the chapter attempts a reading of the 1938 recording sessions, showing the historic value even of documents traditionally sidelined as “illegitimate” or farcical. That even common members of the community were able to act out a religious ceremony speaks to a shared understanding of religious ideas, popular rhythms, and performance practices.

Archival documents supporting the analysis of the DC&R ethnography course include a syllabus, lecture notes, the ethnography society’s monthly bulletins, and the publications of student research projects. The chapter then draws from the documents pertaining to the so-called “1938 Folkloric Research Mission.” These include fifteen ethnographic field books, six booklets of musical transcriptions, musical recordings, and sixteen short silent films produced by the mission. This section is particularly indebted to ethnography student Oneyda Alvarenga and musicologist Álvaro Carlini for their lyrical and musical transcriptions of the ethnographic recordings of the Catimbó ceremonies.³ References to religious practice in 1930s Brazil come from the contemporaneous work by Roger Bastide, Edison Carneiro, Luis de Câmara Cascudo, Gonçalves Fernandes, Nunes Pereira, and Arthur Ramos.⁴ Not without their own flaws and prejudice, these texts

³ Oneyda Alvarenga, *Catimbó: Registros Sonoros de Folclore Musical Brasileiro*, vol. III (São Paulo: Discoteca Pública Municipal, 1949); Carlini, *Cachimbo*.

⁴ Gonçalves Fernandes, *Xangôs do nordeste: Investigações sobre os cultos negro-fetichistas do Recife* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1937); Manuel Nunes Pereira, *A Casa das Minas: Contribuição ao estudo das sobrevivências do culto dos Voduns* (Panteão, 1979); Edison Carneiro, *Religiões negras: Notas de etnografia religiosa; Negros bantos: Notas de etnografia religiosa e de folclore* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1991 [1936]); Arthur Ramos, *O negro brasileiro: Ethnographia, religiosa e psychanalyse*, (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1943); Arthur Ramos, *A possessão fetichista na Bahia* (Salvador: Livraria Científica, 1932); Gilberto Freyre, ed., *Novos estudos Afro-brasileiros:*

continue to be cited as foundational works written on the subject in the first half of the twentieth century. Research published on popular music and performance practices in the period provides further perspective to this study.⁵

Training

An article by Claude Levi-Strauss published in the DC&R's scholarly journal, the *Revista do Arquivo Municipal*, inspired department leader Mário de Andrade to create the ethnography course.⁶ The essay prodded the University of São Paulo to found an anthropological institute, suggesting such a research center could leverage the university into becoming one of the core academic reference points in Latin America. Levi-Strauss had his own motivations for providing such an optimistic prediction. He was frustrated

Trabalhos apresentados ao 1. Congresso Afro-brasileiro do Recife (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1934).

⁵ Among Brazil's early music histories figure Luciano Gallet, *Estudos de Folclore* (Rio de Janeiro: Carlos Wehrs & Cia, 1934); Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins, 1962 [1927]); Mário de Andrade, *Aspectos da música brasileira* (Belo Horizonte: Villa Rica Editoras, 1991); Renato Almeida, *Historia da música brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: F. Briguiet & Comp, 1926). Early texts focusing on popular music traditions in the Northeast include Leonardo Mota, *Violeiros do Norte: poesia e linguagem do sertão nordestino* (Fortaleza: Universidade Federal do Ceará, 1962); C. Guerra Peixe, *Maracatus do Recife* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1955). More recent texts on religious and secular music across Northeast Brazil include Gerard Behague, "Notes on Regional and National Trends in Afro-Brazilian Cult Music," in *Tradition and Renewal: Essays on Twentieth-Century Latin-American Literature and Culture*, ed. by Merlin Foster (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975); Gerard Behague, *Music and Black Ethnicity: The Caribbean and South America* (Miami: North-South Center, University of Miami, 1994); Gerard Behague, "Some Liturgical Functions of Afro-Brazilian Religious Music in Salvador, Bahia," *The World of Music*, 19, 3/4 (1977): 4-23; Gerard Behague, "Patterns of Candomblé Music Performance: An Afro-Brazilian Religious Setting," in Gerard Behague, ed, *Performance Practice: Ethnomusicological Perspectives* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1984), 224-254; José Jorge de Carvalho e Rita Laura Segato, *Shango Cult in Recife, Brazil* (Caracas: Fundación de Etnomusicología y Folclore, 1992); José Jorge de Carvalho, "Aesthetics of Opacity and Transparency: Myth, Music, and Ritual in the Xango-Cult and in the Western Art Tradition," *Latin American Music Review*, 14, 2 (1993): 202-231; Gerhard Kubik, *Angolan Traits in Black Music, Games and Dances of Brazil: A study of African Cultural Extensions Overseas* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigações Científica do Ultramar, Centro de Estudos de Antropologia Cultural; 1979); EB Ramalho, *Cantoria nordestina: música e palavra* (São Paulo: Terceira Margem, 2000); Peter Fryer, *Rhythms of Resistance: African Musical Heritage in Brazil* (London: Pluto, 2000).

⁶ Claude Levi-Strauss, "Em Prol de um instituto de Antropologia física e cultural," *Revista do Arquivo Municipal* 18 (Nov-Dec 1935): 247-257.

with his teaching obligations at the university and hoped such an institute could get him out of the classroom with funding for fieldwork. While the university never entertained the notion, Mário de Andrade took it seriously, seeing it as an opportunity to create a cohort of social scientists prepared to advance his own project of documenting the nation's primitive mentality. Moreover, training and funding students to conduct ethnographic research would result in studies and collected artifacts that could further inspire modernist artists. Andrade approached Claude and his wife Dina Levi-Strauss about the course. Dina Levi-Strauss, without teaching obligations at the university but with experience working in Paris' *Musée de L'Homme*, offered to serve as the professor.⁷

The DC&R held open enrollment for the course and more than fifty students signed up. It lasted six months with weekly meetings from May through October 1936. Dina Levi-Strauss (hereafter Levi-Strauss) served as lecturer throughout the semester. Andrade participated, giving the inaugural address, providing commentary throughout the semester, and orienting students on their research projects. At the end of the semester, the two professors founded the Society of Ethnography of Folklore, composed of course graduates, DC&R leaders, and community supporters. The Society held monthly meetings, providing the ethnographers a forum to present their research and discuss ongoing projects.⁸

⁷ This position may have lent particular credibility and value to Dina Levi-Strauss as a professor since Andrade likely knew that it was at the Musée de L'Homme that Pablo Picasso had seen the African masks inspiring his *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)*, a key work popularizing primitivism in the arts.

⁸ *Boletim da Sociedade de Etnografia e Folclore* no. 1, São Paulo, October 1, 1937, SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP.

Levi-Strauss's course taught the theory of the primitive mind, and she encouraged students to read the work of EB Tylor and James Frazer discussed above (in Chapter 3).⁹ Even more frequently, she referred to two renowned anthropologists: Franz Boas and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl. A familiarity with the ideas set forth by these two scholars results in a surprising discrepancy between the ideas set forth in Levi-Strauss' lectures and those of the scholars she regularly cited.

Mind of Primitive Man, published by Boas in 1921, challenged racial assumptions among anthropologists the world over, providing the first systematic rejection of the entire body of scientific racism. Boas examined long-standing assumptions one by one, discarding each along the way. These included the science of phrenology, the belief in racial essentialism, and anthropologists' uncritical acceptance of primary-sources texts written by colonial governors, missionaries, and tourists. The central intervention of the work was to contest the notion that colonized peoples possessed a distinct, underdeveloped mentality. Where previous researchers argued such groups lacked the capacity for logical reasoning and were driven by impulse (lacking self-control), Boas instead demonstrated that illogical thought and impulsive action are equally characteristic of all people, depending on circumstance. Such traits are situational, not static identifiers.¹⁰

Levi-Strauss cited Boas as an important anthropologist and placed *Mind of Primitive Man* as the first book on her course bibliography. Yet there is no record of her having explained his thesis to the class. Instead, she taught students to contrast the

⁹ See the course bibliography: Dina Levi-Strauss, "Bibliographie," SEF microfilm 1, CCSP.

¹⁰ Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1921 [1911]), especially ch 4.

“individual consciousness represented by the white, adult, civilized man” with the mindset of the “child like the madman like the primitive.”¹¹ The professor had access to Boas’ ideas and knew they were regarded as important to the field, yet either avoided sharing them with her students or held only cursory knowledge of the text’s content.

In 1922, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl’s *Primitive Mentality* also challenged colonial writings that labeled Africans and indigenes as ignorant, uninterested, and incapable of logical reasoning. Primitive men could not be ignorant, argued Lévy-Bruhl, because they were competent hunters, fishers, and farmers. While primitives tended to be uninterested in topics like Christian theology, they were quite interested in talking about livestock and their families. Divergent interests, reasoned Lévy-Bruhl, could not be denounced as lack of interest. Finally, while colonists described primitives as incompetent in logical reasoning, Lévy-Bruhl contended that such groups excelled in memory and recollection. Lévy-Bruhl, like Boas, rejected the contemporaneous theories comparing the primitive psyche to that of a young child or those mentally-unstable. But Lévy-Bruhl instead set forward an argument equally problematic: that the primitives had a mentality utterly separate from that of the civilized.¹²

Lévy-Bruhl saw his thesis as progressive and made a point to repeatedly defend primitive intellect.¹³ He thought his research would allow readers to see primitives not as psychologically incompetent, but rather as making mental judgments according to a separate set of standards. But the work had two racist consequences. First, Lévy-Bruhl’s

¹¹ Dina Levi-Strauss, *Instruções práticas para pesquisas de antropologia física e cultural*, vol. 1 (São Paulo: Departamento de Cultura, 1936), 12.

¹² Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Mentality*, trans. Lilian Clare (New York: MacMillan Company, 1923).

¹³ Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive*, 22, 32, 97.

argument reinforced the idea that all colonized groups could be considered equivalent since they possessed a homogenous psychology. Second, *Primitive Mentality* reinforced the idea that primitives lacked critical judgment.

The course lectures suggest Levi-Strauss understood two of the work's conclusions: that primitives had trouble thinking abstractly and were unable to recognize contradictions.¹⁴ The professor, however, ignored or overlooked Lévy-Bruhl's assertion that primitives had mentalities distinct from those of children and the mentally unstable. In fact, she opened her course by defining ethnography as the study of "the other," which, she said, "refers to the child, the primitive, and the insane."¹⁵ In a later lecture, she relied on the comparison to children to teach students about the primitive mentality. Levi-Strauss explained that primitives were like children, who "confused formulas and grouped together contradictory elements." She further encouraged the young researchers "not to worry about the irrationality generally present in children's drawings." As a result, the young ethnographers learned to accept, and even expect, contradictory comments. During the 1938 trip, the ethnographers frequently received answers that confused them but chose only to commit them to paper rather than ask for clarification. In the case of the religious recording sessions, rather than questioning the performers' credentials, the scholars accepted contradictions as part and parcel of a primitive performance.

Also in line with the primitive mentality thesis set forth by Lévy-Bruhl, Levi-Strauss told students that primitive groups were unable to separate fact from myth. She

¹⁴ "Prelogical mentality is able to adapt itself to two distinct affirmations at once." Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive*, 55.

¹⁵ "O outro—quer dizer a criança, o primitivo, o louco." Aula 1, SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP.

encouraged students to collect myths, legends, and proverbs because, “Legends and myths, for the savages, are history itself. That for which civilized people is simply tradition, for primitives has, so to speak, real life.”¹⁶ In addition to resulting in the ethnographers spending hours transcribing local fairytales, the comment reinforced the notion that informants lacked critical reasoning.

While Levi-Strauss’ lectures on theory prepared students to see their informants as mentally inferior, her teaching on method encouraged the young ethnographers to transgress physical and cultural boundaries. In a handbook on anthropometric studies she published for her students, Levi-Strauss coached the ethnographers regarding how to perform physical examinations. She explicitly encouraged ethnographers to lie to their informants by introducing themselves as health examiners checking the community for illness who were prepared to send medics if any problems were found.¹⁷ Then, in her instructions for examining Amerindians, Levi-Strauss told the young ethnographers to classify female breast shapes; check for circumcision, castration, or clitoral removal; and verify hymen rupture in women.¹⁸ Such invasive examinations transgressed personal physical boundaries and disregarded cultural norms.

Levi-Strauss also suggested using deception and secrecy in cases where informants were hesitant about sharing information. In a lecture on using recording technology, Levi-Strauss explained that “it is not necessary to ensure the goodwill of your subject: the researcher can hide the microphone in his hand, connect this to the

¹⁶ “As lendas e os mitos são a historia mesma dos selvagens. O que para os civilizados é apenas tradição, para os primitivos tem por assim dizer vida real.” Aula 13, SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP.

¹⁷ Levi-Strauss, *Instruções práticas*, 32.

¹⁸ Levi-Strauss, *Instruções práticas*, 56-7.

phonograph through long cords, and place himself next to the informant without him perceiving the trick.”¹⁹ In practice, such deception was impossible; the recording equipment used by the ethnographers was too bulky to hide. During the recording trip, the scholars were forthcoming about their intention to record. In at least one case, they respected a woman’s request that the ethnographers limit their collection to handwritten notes instead of a recording. But in the class, the students were not prepared to consider the possibility that cultural boundaries should be respected.

Finally, Levi-Strauss championed the importance of collecting artifacts without stopping to question how an object’s removal from the community could affect its members. The professor charged her students to collect everything they could get their hands on. In one class she told students to “collect everything featuring decorations.” In another, she summed up: “as a general rule, it can be said, you should collect everything that could be instructive.”²⁰

This instruction prepared the team for their research trip. Luis Saia, head of the team, oversaw field books, finances, and executive decisions. Martin Braunweiser—music director for the DC&R playgrounds and Coral Paulistano (São Paulo Choir)—took responsibility for recordings and musical transcriptions. Benedito Pacheco and Antonio Ladeira carried equipment and solved engineering problems that arose.²¹ The group had been trained to prioritize the collection of sounds and artifacts over respect for cultural

¹⁹ Aula 8, SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP.

²⁰ Aulas 6 and 14. SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP.

²¹ Mário de Andrade to Francisco Pati, correspondence, May 23, 1938, Co29; Luis Saia to Oneyda Alvarenga, correspondence, May 26, 1938, Co 46. Digital version available in *Cadernetas de Campos: Missão de Pesquisa Folclórica* (hereafter CCMPF), eds. Camargo Toni, Flávia, José Saia Neto, Vera Lúcia Cardim de Cerqueira, and Aurélio Eduardo do Nascimento. DVD (São Paulo: Centro Cultural São Paulo, 2010).

boundaries. Having studied the primitive mentality thesis, the team anticipated meeting people unable to think abstractly or recognize contradictions. This, in turn, permitted a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the ethnographers were able to confirm their own racialized prejudice surrounding the Brazilian Northeast.

Trip Ethics

The trip lasted from February to July 1938, allowing the group to witness two periods of traditional festivals: Carnival in February, and the *Festas Juninas* (harvest festivals) of June and July. The team set out from the city of São Paulo via train to Santos, the state's principal port. There they caught a ship and headed northward along the coastline, stopping in ports along the way until arriving in Recife, Pernambuco. The team spent the next six months traveling the Northeastern states of Pernambuco, Paraíba, Ceará, Piauí, Maranhão, and the Northern state of Pará.²² They recorded a wide variety of musical genres, targeting the types of music Mário de Andrade had stressed. These included work songs, dramatic dances, and the religious music. In addition to recording the sounds, the group filmed sixteen black-and-white silent shorts. Finally, they amassed ex-votos, the aforementioned hand-carved offerings given at a church or altar on behalf of a loved one.

Saia encountered his first such offering in Pernambuco and, from then on, he and his team began stealing many of these statues from churches and altars. Levi-Strauss's teachings on secrecy and collection became reproduced in Saia's disregard for the

²² Narratives of the 1938 mission are available in Flávia Camargo Toni, "Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas do Departamento de Cultura," Divisão de Difusão Cultural; Flávia Camargo Toni, et al, eds, "Diário da Missão" in CCMPPF. Álvaro Carlini, "Cante lá."

emotional and cultural consequences of robbing religious offerings. Saia recounted the first encounter with the ex-votos: “On a lunch break [in Meirim, Pernambuco] I visited a little chapel that existed there. The desire to find things carried me, as always, to even more indiscrete searches. [Underneath] the finial of the constructed walls, [there were] boxes full of something I could not make out...”²³ Saia treated the church as a site for excavation rather than a sacred space. In these lines, he accounted for his action only by naming his “desire to find things.” In one of the boxes, Saia found a carved wooden head. He carried it to a local resident, asked what it was, and then added it to the ethnographers’ collection.

The team then made a habit of collecting ex-votos as they continued beyond Pernambuco. In the field books, Saia was even more explicit about his method of acquisition: “At a chapel I found a very interesting Saint Sebastian with a ribbed torso. I robbed a saint there.”²⁴ Saia later gave an idea of the number of pieces they had taken, stating that “the state of Paraíba...provided the majority of the upwards of a hundred pieces that can now be seen in São Paulo’s Discoteca Museum.”²⁵ Nor did the team simply pick out the oldest or most faded pieces. The ethnographer reported, “Visiting an open-air *cruzeiro*, I found a good amount of pieces, some totally worn by weather, others somewhat burned, and others visibly new. I chose the ones that appeared the most

²³ “Em Meirim... num intervalo de lanche, visitei a capelinha aí existente. A vontade de achar coisas me levou, como sempre, às procuras mais indiscretas: remate dos muros da construção, caixas cheias não sei de que, atrás do altar... Precisamente atrás do altar desta capela encontrei uma cabeça de madeira que no primeiro momento julguei tratar-se de uma parte de santo de roca. Mas, segundo informou o cicerone improvisado [Napoleão Xavier], era um milagre. Recolhi-o (...),” Luiz Saia, *Escultura Popular Brasileira* (São Paulo: Edições Gaveta, 1944), 9.

²⁴ “Na capela daí um S. Sebastião popular very interessante com costelas de estrias. Furtei um santo aí.” (The English “very” is in the original). Field book 4A: 13. CCMPEF.

²⁵ “O Estado de Paraíba..forneceu a maior parte da centena de peças que hoje se encontram no Museu da Discoteca Pública de S. Paulo.” Saia, *Escultura*, 10.

interesting.”²⁶ A *cruzeiro* is a large cross placed in public spaces, used to designate a public meeting place or a site where a loved one had passed away. The presence of “visibly new” sculptures suggests this was a place that families were still visiting to honor their deceased.²⁷ Instead of considering cultural consequences, Saia simply took what interested him, right in line with the general rule that Levi-Strauss had set forth: collect everything that could be instructive.

The concern for the success of the project also jeopardized the safety of the informants. In some cities, the very staging of a non-Catholic religious ceremony was grounds for imprisonment and confiscation of musical instruments. This was the case in Recife, where a Catholic group led by interventor Agemenon Magalhães limited the days that ceremonies could be conducted and required Afro-Brazilian religious leaders to apply for licenses. Raids, arrests, and newspaper defamation campaigns were frequent.²⁸

Arriving in Recife, the mission met with Magalhães, who asked the team to clear its recording project with government secretary Manuel Labambo. The ethnographers were especially hopeful of recording music associated with *Xangô*, an Afro-Brazilian religious practice popular throughout Recife. Labambo, however, firmly instructed mission leader Luis Saia to avoid recording Afro-Brazilian music. Another colleague of

²⁶ “Na cidade de Tacaratú, onde ficamos aboletados, visitando um cruzeiro ao ar livre, no alto de um morro próximo, achei uma regular quantidade de peças, umas já completamente desfeitas pelas intempéries, outras meio queimadas e outras visivelmente novas. Colhi os que me pareceram mais interessantes.” Saia, *Escultura*, 9.

²⁷ Other cases of taking recently-created ex-votos can be noted in the field books, such as: “Tacaratú (Pernambuco) 259. Cabeça de madeira, tamanho médio de fatura recente. Cruzeiro de Gameleira.” Field book 2B: 48. CCMPF. There was one case in which Saia appears to have paid for an ex-voto: “na Capela de Santo Antonio...á noite. Ela estava em cima do altar. Custou 2\$000.” Field book 2B: 47. CCMPF. Still, the case invites the questions of why the ethnographers were entering chapels at night and who was selling them altar-top saints.

²⁸ Gonçalves, *Xangôs*.

the interventor chipped in, telling Saia that the group would do a much better service to Brazilian patrimony by recording dances and songs tied to Portugal, not Africa.²⁹

Speaking to local musicians, the ethnographers learned about a Xangô *terreiro* (house of worship) in the *Casa Amarela* (Yellow-House) neighborhood. Over the next weeks—with the help of local contacts—the team successfully negotiated with local *Delegacia de Investigações e Capturas* (Delegacy for Capture and Investigation) for written permission to record the Xangô ceremony. In addition, the local authorities agreed to give the ethnographers the musical instruments recently confiscated from the local community.³⁰

Apolinário Gomes da Mota led the *terreiro* in Casa Amarela. He was one of sixteen leaders cooperating with the *Serviço de Higiene Mental* (Service of Mental Hygiene), an organization of social scientists serving as an intermediary between the state and Afro-Brazilian community. Cooperation with the state gave Gomes da Mota limited protection over his work, and this was likely the reason he was willing to conduct the ritual.³¹ After agreeing to perform some traditional religious songs for the ethnographers, Gomes da Mota was asked to hold a rehearsal in his own *terreiro*, giving the ethnographers the opportunity to hear an explanation of the component parts of an actual ritual, and take notes regarding the appearance of an actual religious space.

²⁹ Luis Saia to Mário de Andrade, correspondence, February 16, 1938. Co 34, CCMPF

³⁰ Luis Saia to Mário de Andrade, correspondence, February 26, 1938. Co 35, CCMPF. See also Carlini, “Cante lá,” 81. The local contacts were modernist writers Ascenso Ferreira and Waldemar de Oliveira, friends to Andrade.

³¹ Gomes da Mota had granted interviews that informed the publications of ethnographic leaders of the period. See Gonçalves, *Xangôs*; Ramos, *O Negro Brasileiro*; and Roger Bastide, “Contribuição ao Estudo do Sincretismo Católico-Fetichista,” in *Sociologia* 1 (Universidade de São Paulo, 1946).

Official permission, however, did not guarantee the safety of the musicians. The police interrupted the rehearsal, terrifying the musicians. Some even jumped out the window trying to escape. Saia stood up and showed the police his letter of special permission. The police accepted the document and left, allowing the rehearsal to continue. This event was never recounted until a 1988 interview with Braunweiser.³²

The ethnographers made no mention of the incident in their correspondence with the DC&R workers overseeing the 1938 mission. Halfway through his field notes of the rehearsal, however, Saia wrote “police” in the middle of a song, and then scratched it out.³³ One potential explanation for the scratching out of the term is that Saia did not want researchers in São Paulo to know what had happened. But this interpretation seems questionable since the word is still legible. Another possibility is that one of the singers yelled “police!” to alert the rest of the performers, and Saia momentarily thought it was part of a song lyric before seeing the police come in. In a note several pages later, Saia wrote in parentheses, “some [performers] outside the window are singing as well.” The comment suggests the possibility that some of the scared musicians had still refused to come back into the room fearing that the police would return.³⁴

It seems unlikely that the ethnographers had any way of knowing police would drop in and hassle the local musicians. The researchers had, in fact, treated the local government with respect, waiting for permission before scheduling a rehearsal. But as this was the first session recording religious music, the experience showed the

³² Recounted in Carlini, “Cante lá,” 82.

³³ Field book 1A: 82. CCMPPF.

³⁴ (alguns fora da janella [sic] cantam tambem),” Field book 1A: 90. CCMPPF.

ethnographers that their project potentially endangered local informants. The ethnographers continued their mission nevertheless.

A subsequent religious leader explained he feared the spiritual consequences of sharing his religious tradition just as much as local legal consequences. In the city of João Pessoa, Paraíba, Saia worked to find Catimbó leaders. When Saia finally sat down with a Catimbó leader in order to propose a recording session, the leader rejected the idea. He explained he was in the middle of working to cure a member of the community and “if there was a bombardment disturbing the spiritual line of energy [*corrente*] it meant certain death for somebody.”³⁵ The leader may have been referring to local police as a potential bombardment, or may have been suggesting that the ethnographers with their recording equipment would themselves be the bombardment. Regardless, the leader feared the spiritual consequences accompanying the scholarly project.

The team would later approach another Catimbó master, Zé Hilário, outside of Alagoa Nova, Paraíba. The leader refused to have anything to do with the crew. Returning to the city, however, the team stopped to chat with a man on the side of the road. After listening to the ethnographer’s disappointment over the failed encounter, Anísio José Xavier claimed he had learned some of Hilário’s religious songs while spending two weeks under treatment with the master several years prior. In exchange for a generous 45\$000—half of Braunweiser’s monthly salary—Xavier agreed to sing through a typical ceremony.³⁶ The mission set up their portable studio and recorded the

³⁵ Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 23. Other potential informants also declined on grounds of the police threat. In his field book, Saia wrote, “Apareceu-me no hotel o Luiz do Catimbó com as toadas dêle escriptas e...[ellipses in original] se quexando da policia.” Field book 6: 131. CCMPF.

³⁶ Saia received 500\$000 a month, Benedito Pacheco 200\$000, Antonio Ladeira 150\$000, and Martin Braunweiser 100\$000. In six months, only 5.700\$000 contos had been designated for salaries, leaving more

one-man show.³⁷ Minutes before, the team had clearly heard that Mestre Hilário was not open to sharing his music. If Hilário's refusal came from fear of local authorities, the Xavier session disregarded the spiritual leader's request for safety. If the master's denial instead came from a desire to maintain secrecy, the team's recording ignored the leader's wishes to not have his tunes recorded.

Subsequently, sociologist Roger Bastide wrote on the importance of secrecy to the religious communities throughout Northeastern Brazil, suggesting this to be one of the central operative structures in protecting sects and memory. Secrets, of course, can hinder memory if a knowledgeable leader passes away before teaching younger disciples. But Bastide demonstrated that secrets also serve as a protection mechanism. Secrecy allowed sects to guard themselves from external criticism. This was critical in places such as Recife, where Catholic political leaders were bent on suppressing Afro-Brazilian religion.³⁸ Second, secrecy allows an institution to protect a spiritual leader's claim to legitimacy. In religions based on oral tradition rather than the written word, limiting knowledge makes it impossible for the wider community to know how rituals have changed over time, if at all. This enables religious leaders to maintain claims of purity of tradition. Historians Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger would later coin the phrase "invention of tradition" to describe rituals of group identity subsequently endowed with

than 90% of the budget for travel expenses and payment for performances and ethnographic objects. Mário de Andrade to Francisco Pati, correspondence, May 23, 1938. Co 29. CCMPPF.

³⁷ Field book 4: 70-74; Field book 5: 152-160. CCMPPF.

³⁸ Bastide, *African Religions of Brazil*, ch 11.

links to a distant past.³⁹ It is secrecy that makes it possible to sustain that invented traditions were never invented.

Saia would personally correspond with Roger Bastide in the years after his 1938 trip. But it is quite unlikely that the team leader had any knowledge of Bastide's thoughts on secrecy before the recording trip. As such, the ethnographic team cannot be accused of intentionally undermining religious legitimacy. The issue instead is that the team disregarded requests for non-interference in a closed-door ceremony. It is fair to see the ethnographers' attitude as a direct result of the teaching evident in the Levi-Strauss ethnographic handbook, which advocated for deceit and the transgression of boundaries in the name of scientific progress. In the wake of the near arrest of the Xangô musicians, and again after being rejected by Catimbó Master Hilário, the ethnographic team deemed their recording mission as more important than respecting the safety and confidentiality of their informants.

(Mis)Encounters

Traveling through the state of Paraíba, the ethnographers recorded three sessions of Catimbó. The religious practices are among the least-documented in Brazil. There are few written accounts of the tradition—primary or secondary, popular or scholarly. In the 1930s, folklorist Luis de Câmara Cascudo researched the religion and provided the best documentation currently available regarding the practice and theology of Catimbó in the period under study here. His research, however, came from the state of Rio Grande do

³⁹ Eric Hobsbawm and T.O. Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Norte rather than from Paraíba.⁴⁰ Sociologists such as Roger Bastide later discussed the religion but based their comments almost entirely on Cascudo's own work instead of from participant observation. Since then, scholarship on Catimbó has seldom appeared outside of entries in encyclopedias of folklore or religion.⁴¹ The lack of documentation and scholarship on the religion complicates any attempts to make claims as to the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of the 1938 sessions.

Yet as explored below, details from the performances and comments made by the singers themselves make it clear that the Catimbó performers were not practicing religious leaders. In two of the three cases, the ceremony participants were, in fact, very forthright that they were not practitioners of the religion. It is conceivable that the ethnographers took them at their word, and chose to pay for performances anyway, fearing that no religious leaders would step forward to work with the scholars. But the archival sources suggest the complete opposite. Watching the ceremonies, the ethnographers attributed each blunder and forgotten line to the performers' primitive mentalities. The scholars then deemed the sessions as important cultural expressions documenting the primitive mentality present across the Northeast.

The team's first Catimbó recording session took place with Manuel Laurentino da Silva. Following up on leads from local contacts, the ethnographers traveled to a *sítio*

⁴⁰ Luís de Câmara Cascudo, "Notas sobre o catimbó," in *Novos Estudos*, ed. Freyre; Luís de Câmara Cascudo, *Meleagro: Depoimentos e Pesquisa sobre a Magia no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: AGIR, 1951); Luís de Câmara Cascudo, *Dicionário do folclore brasileiro* (São Paulo: Edições Melhoramentos, 1979). Modernist poet and amateur folklorist Ascenso Ferreira conducted enough research on the religion to write poetry highlighting concepts from the ceremony but published nothing in prose on the subject. Ascenso Ferreira, *Catimbó e outros poemas* (Rio de Janeiro: J. Olympio, 1963).

⁴¹ Albino Gonçalves Fernandes, *O Folclore Mágico do Nordeste* (Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira, 1938); Anthony Pinn, Stephen Finley, and Torin Alexanders, eds., *African American Religious Cultures* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2009); Sidney Greenfield and Andre Droogers, eds. *Reinventing Religions: Syncretism and Transformation in Africa and the Americas* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield 2001).

(ranch) outside of the city of Itabaiana, in Paraíba. They proposed a recording session, and Silva agreed to hold a small ceremony the next day with his wife. On May 5, 1938, the mission returned to the house and recorded 33 melodies.

Silva claimed he had been trained in Catimbó, but did not hide the details: the seventy-year old Silva had learned the religious practice while in Recife when he was 14 years old, meaning he had learned the tunes in the 1880s.⁴² His wife, in turn, learned the songs from her husband. The field books provide no further information on their training. None of the ethnographers followed up with further questions to clarify if Silva had been living in Recife or just visiting, if he had studied under someone or just gone to a few ceremonies, and if he had performed at all since his learning experience more than fifty years prior.

Silva and his wife were familiar enough with the songs to sing verses together, although the recordings suggest they depended on each other to get to the end of the tunes. By the second half of the performance, the husband and wife were regularly committing noticeable errors. Silva would tell the group he was going to invoke one master, and then sing instead to a different one. Or both would forget their lines and tell the ethnographers they needed to start over. The duo began to push each other to finish tunes with injunctions such as an urgent “go!” Increasingly nervous, the wife began to speak quietly and even non-sensibly.⁴³

The anxiety and mistakes of the show provoked one of the few occasions in which the ethnographers actually included personal reactions in their field notes. In general, the

⁴² Field book 5: 151. CCMPF.

⁴³ The ceremony, complete with the nervous exchanges, is documented in Field book 5: 134-151 and Field book 9: 1-59. CCMPF. They are also transcribed in Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 155-169.

researchers logged only a bare minimum of notes. This included basic biographical information of each informant, the title or first line of each song, the disc number to which each song corresponded, and a list of artifacts collected. The ethnographers never took the time to write summaries of religious events after they happened. They only rarely logged personal reactions, judgments about informants, or evaluations of a given interaction.

Yet a few personal reactions show up in the field books during the Silva performance, suggesting the ethnographers became increasingly fed up with what they judged to be a ceremony of low quality. Although Saia wrote “the woman knows more than the old man,” he repeatedly noted her mistakes in his field book.⁴⁴ In one case he penned, “The woman started the song, messed up again, turned out horseshit.”⁴⁵ Ladeira or Pacheco, writing in another field book, concluded: “bad bad bad this is shit.”⁴⁶

The second Catimbó encounter occurred in João Pessoa, Paraíba. The team had already passed through the city in April, trying to find someone willing to conduct a ceremony. No one volunteered, as local authorities had prohibited such religious manifestations. The ethnographers spread the word that they had official permission to record a ceremony and that they would generously reimburse informants for their time. They then left the town and returned the following month. Upon their return, a man

⁴⁴ Field book 5: 141-3. CCMPF.

⁴⁵ Field book 5: 141. CCMPF

⁴⁶ “mal mal mal uma merda,” Field book 9: 59. CCMPF

named Luiz Gonzaga Ângelo offered to conduct the ceremony.⁴⁷ During the ceremony, the team recorded 28 melodies and produced a film.⁴⁸

Gonzaga's knowledge of Catimbó was questionable at best. Although his songs invoked Catimbó deities, he called his performance a "Xangô," and claimed to have studied under a Xangô priest [*babalorixá*] in Recife named "Apolinário." It is possible he was referring to the same Apolinário Gomes da Mota narrowly avoiding arrest while conducting a ceremony for the ethnographers in Recife. But none of Gonzaga's songs, in Portuguese, sounded like the Yoruba chants sung at the Gomes da Mota session. Gonzaga may have referred to this "Apolinário" to gain credibility. He could have picked up the name either from the researchers themselves or as a result of the small name Gomes da Mota had made for himself by helping earlier scholars researching Afro-Brazilian religion in Recife.⁴⁹

Furthermore, those cooperating with Gonzaga admitted they had no experience. Gonzaga purchased white clothing and jewelry for dancers he had asked to join him, and then asked the ethnographers for reimbursement.⁵⁰ The purchase implies dancers either wanted new outfits, or did not have any because they had never been involved in such a

⁴⁷ This Gonzaga is not to be confused with the famous Northeastern musician of the same name who would move to Rio just a few years later. While the father of the *Baião* music style was in fact travelling the Northeast with the military at this same time, full names (Luiz Gonzaga do Nascimento versus Luiz Gonzaga Ângelo) and photographs assure these were two separate musicians.

⁴⁸ Field book 4: 186-198; Field book 6: 136-141; "Catimbó do mestre Luís Gonzaga Ângelo," Silent Film 9.A, CCMPE.

⁴⁹ Apolinário aided scholars such as Fernandes Gonçalves in their ethnographic research. Fernandes Gonçalves, *O Folclore Mágico do Nordeste* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1938); Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 31.

⁵⁰ In one of the field books, an informant had written: "There are six men each man with white pants and white shirts and white hats. There are eleven pairs of shoes each 10\$000 between men and women, while the women in addition have a kilo of bracelets of small pearls to give an idea of the bill for the xango [catimbó] ceremony." Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 36.

ceremony. The latter clearly seems to have been the case. When the ethnographers asked each dancer where they had learned Catimbó and how long they had been performing, they all responded the same way: their teacher had been Gonzaga himself, and they had “never before sung or participated in any Catimbó ceremony.”⁵¹

Gonzaga’s ceremony added in a host of elements absent in the other two ceremonies and in third-party descriptions of Catimbó. According to the account by folklorist Câmara Cascudo, the Catimbó ceremony is conducted by a religious leader called a *mestre*, or master. The mestre sits at the *mesa*, or table, and the term is used as metonym for the ceremony itself. On the table lay various props, including a Catholic cross, a saint (frequently St. Anthony), and a bottle of rum. Then there are five candles, representing the cities of the spiritual realm where deities reside. Between the candles and the master sits the *princesa*, a bowl that holds a hallucinogenic alcohol prepared from the bark of the *jurema* tree. The master drinks the alcohol and smokes tobacco from a pipe, allowing the drugs to facilitate his transition into the spiritual world. In verses and melodies, known as *linhas* and *toadas*, the master invokes spirits. These spirits can be of deceased Amerindians (*caboclos*), African slaves (*pretos velhos*), or Catimbó masters (still called *mestres*). The spirits take turns possessing the living master for brief periods, during which earthly consultants can ask for remedies for physical or emotional problems. The deities prescribe remedies and then depart. After the last deity has visited, a closing song is sung and the ceremony ends.⁵²

⁵¹ Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 20-21.

⁵² Câmara Cascudo, *Meleagro*.

Gonzaga was familiar with the idea of the *mesa*, and set one up in his own eclectic way. In the middle of the table stood a wooden cross, the image of a saint, and a bottle of cachaça [sugar-cane rum]. On the sides of the tables, plants sat potted in tin cans of Quaker oats and Veedol motor oil—images of North-American consumer capitalism sharing space on an altar consecrating Catholicism and alcohol.⁵³ Beyond the table, the ritual quickly deviated from traditional accounts. Likely in an effort to make the ceremony's syncretism easy to recognize, Gonzaga chose to add in props and gestures he perceived as serving as synecdoche to each of the three cultures—Amerindian, African, and Catholic—commonly recognized as contributing to Catimbó.

From the Amerindians, Gonzaga pulled the bow-and-arrow, the pipe, and the maracá. Unlike other accounts, in which a single pipe and maracá govern the ceremony, Gonzaga distributed the props to every dancer. Instead of using a traditional maracá, made of calabash, the leader had given out metal shakers. Based on the appearance of the shakers, one inverted tin cone on top of the other, it is possible the maracas were quickly made from a household item common in the period: a *candeeiro*, or small kerosene lamp.

From Afro-Brazilian culture, Gonzaga borrowed the practice of call-and-response singing and the dancing in a *roda*, or circular formation. The dancers then dressed in the outfits purchased for the event and reminiscent of Afro-Brazilian religion: white dresses, jewelry, and bare feet. From religions like Xangô and Candomblé, Gonzaga even appropriated the *queda em santo*, or falling over induced by spiritual possession. This especially fell outside the parameters of other descriptions of the Catimbó ritual. Twice in

⁵³ The description of the ceremony comes from “Catimbó do Mestre Luiz Gonzaga Angelo,” Silent Film, 9.A, CCMPPF.

the short silent film of his ceremony, Gonzaga pointed to a woman in the circle with his maracá, cueing her to fall. She immediately fell down, at which point another dancer proceeded to cover the fallen body in pipe smoke. The falling creatively blended the Amerindian ideas of the maracá as a sacred instrument and smoke as a cleansing agent with the Afro-Brazilian idea of visible spiritual manifestations. On a practical level, the maracá served as an effective baton with which to conduct the ceremony. Finally, from Catholic culture, Gonzaga used the cross and saint to decorate the table, and then led the group in the gesture of crossing one's body to initiate the ceremony.⁵⁴ The Gonzaga ceremony was the most elaborate of the three, and also featured the smoothest performance. Gonzaga and his wife remembered the words to their songs, and were able to run through the entire ceremony without noticeable stumbling.

The third Catimbó recording session featured the tunes sung by the above-mentioned Anísio José Xavier, as consolation for the unsuccessful attempt to work with Master Hilário. Xavier was the least knowledgeable of the performers. When interviewed about the ritual, Xavier inverted steps and practices suggested by traditional accounts of the ceremony. He put saints on the wall instead of on the table and then suggested lighting two candles instead of the customary one candle for each of the five heavenly cities. The roadside informant did not speak of the princesa bowl and never mentioned a pipe. Xavier suggested all patients seeking health drank jurema, whereas other reports suggest only the master drank. He stated the ceremony was unaccompanied by instruments, although all other accounts insist on the importance of the percussion from the Amerindian maracá.

⁵⁴ "Catimbó do Mestre Luiz Gonzaga Angelo," CCMPPF.

Xavier demonstrated comparatively little knowledge of Catimbó deities. Where Gonzaga and Silva had each been able to sing (or at least struggle through) toadas to more than twenty spirits, Xavier only invoked four deities. Of these, one was master Hilário himself. This suggests either that, if Xavier was indeed a recovered patient of Hilário's, he failed to understand that the ceremony was intended to invoke deceased spirits, not contemporary masters. Or, Xavier was never actually a patient of Hilário's and had simply misunderstood the ethnographers, thinking that the Master Hilário they sought was a deity rather than an earthly master (the term *mestre* is used for masters, both alive and deceased alike).

In either case, Xavier never claimed to be a Catimbó leader; rather he had simply offered to sing a few songs associated with master Hilário in exchange for a large sum of money. The fact that they were so lax in their standards suggests that, for the São Paulo ethnographers, legitimacy had nothing to do with religious knowledge or local respect. It was instead contingent on a performance of primitivity. This idea would be articulated more clearly in the years after the trip. Upon returning to São Paulo, the scholars turned in the artifacts, field books, and records to Oneyda Alvarenga, head of the DC&R's Music Library and herself a graduate of the ethnography course. Working through the material over the next years, Alvarenga concluded that the scholars had succeeded in finding and recording legitimate Brazilian culture. This legitimacy was measured by the extent to which the encounters matched up with the theses of the European anthropologists of the primitive mind.

The music librarian printed her reflections alongside transcriptions of the recorded material in a five-volume series published throughout the 1940s. She claimed that three

Catimbó ceremonies attested to the survival of primitive practices from Amerindians, Afro-Brazilians, and superstitious Portuguese colonists. Reflecting on the Gonzaga session, Alvarenga asserted “it is worth noting the endurance of two elements that characterize Amerindian cults: the ritual and mystic importance of the jurema ritual and the process of exorcism via smoke.”⁵⁵ Here, Alvarenga was repeating the argument proposed by James Frazer and EB Tylor—and stressed by Andrade—that exorcism via smoke served as critical evidence of a primitive mentality.⁵⁶

Discussing the Silva ceremony, Alvarenga again stressed that the “documentation still permitted a view” of three primitive practices: the cult to jurema, exorcism via smoke, and European Spiritism. She used the word “still” to suggest that the folklore of the Northeast had not yet evolved enough to make their primitive roots unrecognizable. Alvarenga concluded that the three primitive practices proved Silva’s ceremony had “magical-religious aims essentially the same as those of the other known Catimbós.”⁵⁷

When Alvarenga did not understand an aspect of a ceremony, she turned back to Lévy-Bruhl’s argument that primitives were incapable of abstract thinking and oblivious to contradictions. Saia had recorded asking seven participants in the Gonzaga performance about the length of time they had been involved in Catimbó. Every participant responded that this was the first time they had ever performed in such a ceremony. After her transcription of this exchange, Alvarenga commented that “previous

⁵⁵ “é constatável a permanência de mais dois elementos que se podem considerar fundamentais para a caracterização dos cultos de inspiração ameríndia: a importância mística e ritual da jurema e o processo de defumação exorcística e curativa por meio do cachimbo.” Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 35.

⁵⁶ See Chapter 3, footnote 59.

⁵⁷ Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 97.

information [the interview with Gonzaga], renders this response incomprehensible.”⁵⁸

Rather than recognizing that this was, indeed, the first performance for each of Gonzaga’s helpers, Alvarenga preferred the idea that the informants had either failed to understand the question or had been unable to speak coherently.

Alvarenga hoped to use the documentation to create a collective biography of the Catimbó deities. Lacking clear information, she blamed participants rather than her colleagues, who—as the field books suggests—neither engaged in reflective commentary nor asked follow-up questions for clarification. Instead, Alvarenga blamed loss of tradition: “The divinities of this catimbó are, in terms of the available information, in the same precarious situation already pointed to in the catimbó of Luiz Gonzaga Ângelo.”⁵⁹ Here, Alvarenga’s *a priori* assumption that tradition was dying out created the framework for her engagement with the forgotten repertoire of the Catimbó performers. Reflecting on the various questions left unanswered in the field books, Alvarenga concluded one of three problems had occurred. Either this was an issue of “the imprecision of the research,” meaning that, to her credit, she questioned the research of her colleagues. Or this was a result “of the catimbó leader’s own inability to clarify.” Finally, it could have been a result of the contradictory nature of primitive religion: “what sprouts forth from

⁵⁸ “Da sua ficha, consta uma informação que os dados anteriores tornam incompreensível: “É a primeira vez que canta no Catimbó.” Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 20-21.

⁵⁹ “As divindades deste catimbó estão, diante dos informes disponíveis, na mesma precária situação já assinalada no catimbó de Luís Gonzaga Ângelo e que ainda assinalaremos no catimbó de Alagoa Nova.” Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 98.

these notes and lyrics is a series of poorly-explained deities or ones that are naturally vague and diffuse.”⁶⁰

Alvarenga’s presumption of a primitive psychology appeared even clearer as she reviewed the Silva ceremony and puzzled over comments surrounding a deity named Mestra Angelina. At one point, Silva’s wife had explained that Mestra Angelina (whose name translates as “Angelic Mistress”) was three separate women. On another occasion, the wife stated Angelina was a single entity. Alvarenga—in spite of living among a Catholic culture that affirmed the divine as simultaneously three and one—suggested it was primitive psychology that accounted for the contradiction. Even more puzzling to the ethnographer was that Mestra Angelina could be simultaneously referred to as “Nossa Senhora” (Our Lady, aka the Virgin Mary) and also “negra da Costa” (black woman from the Coast). How could the Catimbó community, wondered Alvarenga, believe a deity was both the Virgin mother *and* black? Alvarenga hypothesized:

Regarding the incongruity, real or apparent, that exists in attributing an entity, confused with Our Lady, the quality of “black woman from the Coast,” we must remember that: 1) Such a contradiction does not exist in the magic mentality of the masses [*povo*]. Black African water goddesses, for example, were among us [in Brazil] connected to prayers to Our Lady. 2) If it is not probable that Manuel Laurentino [da Silva] is excluding the notion of [skin] color when he says “black woman of the Coast,” and it appears certain that the fundamental idea he is trying to bestow is one of magical force: *black woman of the Coast* would be the same as *powerful sorceress* [feiticeira poderosa].⁶¹ (emphasis in original).

⁶⁰ “Por imprecisão das pesquisas ou pela própria incapacidade de esclarecimento do catimbozeiro informante, a verdade é que brota dessas notas e dos textos dos cânticos, uma série de divindades mal explicadas ou naturalmente vagas e difusas.” Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 98.

⁶¹ “Sobre a incongruência, real ou aparente, que existe no atribuir-se a uma entidade confundida com Nossa Senhora a qualidade de ‘negra da Costa’, lembramos que: 1) Tal contradição não existe para a mentalidade mágica do povo. As deusas negro-africanas das águas, por exemplo, foram entre nós ligadas a invocações de Nossa Senhora. 2) Se não é provável que Manuel Laurentino exclua das palavras ‘negra da Costa’ a noção de cor da pele, parece certo que a idéia fundamental que êle lhes empresta é a de força mágica: *negra de Costa* seria o mesmo que *feiticeira poderosa*.” Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 99.

In the first half of this quote, Alvarenga repeated a basic thesis from the ethnography course, in which Levi-Strauss had herself paraphrased Lévy-Bruhl: people with a primitive (“magic”) mentality do not recognize contradictions. In the same line, Alvarenga further suggested the entire Northeastern *povo* (basically all non-elites) shared this mentality. In the second half of the quote, Alvarenga suggested that the term “black woman” did not refer to skin color but rather to a “feiticeira poderosa,” a female master of primitive religion. But the comments tells us more about Alvarenga than it does about Silva. Specifically, it suggests that Alvarenga saw blackness as interchangeable with primitive thought and religion.

Alvarenga’s comments reveal her assumptions that a certain races (black), regions (Northeast), and religions (anything not Catholic or atheist) indicated mental underdevelopment. This was encased in scientific discourse and its legitimizing hard evidence: plastic discs, film, field books, and published monographs. Only to the extent that performers held up to this primitive paradigm could they be valued by the scholars. During the recording trip, the ethnographers were, in effect, demanding a double performance. The first was that of the religious ceremony with its accompanying music. The second was the performance of a racialized notion of a homogenous Northeastern primitivity.

Performance and Memory in the Catimbó Sessions

Reading the religious sessions through the primitivity paradigm allowed the ethnographers to explain apparent contradictions in informant responses and memory lapses during sessions. More significantly, it allowed São Paulo scholars to reinforce their

sense of intellectual superiority over Northeastern Brazilians. Exchanging this paradigm for one in which both ethnographers and informants are recognized as possessing equal intellectual capacities—and in which religious sessions are not judged by the presence of the primitive—opens the way to a new interpretation of the recording sessions. The Catimbó informants were not respected religious leaders in their communities. Rather, they were performers who produced the best show they could, stringing together bits of popular theology in a performance that drew heavily from local music styles. In doing so, they testified to the presence of a collective memory of music in 1930s Paraíba.

In his essay on the collective memory of musicians, historian Maurice Halbwachs pointed out that musicians rely extensively on memory because music itself is so difficult to notate;⁶² this was all the more true outside of Brazil's urban centers in the 1930s. In small towns, sheet music literacy was uncommon and recording equipment so rare that few informants had seen it before the 1938 visit. Remembering a musical repertoire is, Halbwachs said, a collective act to the extent that, even beyond sharing songs, musicianship requires sharing rules and definitions of rhythm, harmony, form, and the like. Beyond this, musicians share the mnemonic devices they use to memorize and cycle through enormous amounts of unwritten musical material. Fascinating in the Catimbó material is that the informants were neither theologians nor trained musicians, and yet still engaged the three memory strategies discussed by Halbwachs. They applied these strategies not only in to their singing, but also to their prayers and ritual acts. While professional musicians (in Paraíba and around the world) engage script, form, and

⁶² Maurice Halbwachs, "The Collective Memory of Musicians," in *The Collective Memory*, trans. Francis Ditter Jr. and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper & Row, 1980).

recursion with a higher degree of complexity, and with broader repertoires, the case suggests a widespread (albeit limited) familiarity with the rules, norms, and purposes of both Catimbó ceremonies and popular music traditions in 1930s Paraíba.

Script

The comparison of the three performances suggests performers loosely held to a common script comprised of speech, behaviors, and even a specified “appropriate” cast of deities. To begin with, the singers relied on a stock of religious terms and words, which they littered throughout their songs and prayers. The terms can be categorized: occupation of the spiritual masters; geography of the spirit world; self-referential terms referring to the ritual itself; local flora used in remedies; and terms coming from Catholicism.

Performers knew that, in general, different deities were attributed the power to heal, create amorous bonds, and pronounce blessings or curses. In some cases, performers knew the spiritual occupation of specific deities. These occupations were sprinkled throughout song lyrics. Silva knew Mestre Vigário was a matchmaker (“I marry as I go”) while the feared Zé Pelintra played the role of trickster and worker of curses (“I killed a blind man and a beggar on the way”).⁶³ He also recognized which deities had a vice for alcohol (“little white bottle, who was it that broke you?” and “I drank the firewater”).⁶⁴

⁶³ All lyrics from the three sessions have been transcribed in Carlini, *Cachimbo*. “Casando eu venho” and “matei padrinho e madrinha” in Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 172, 165, respectively.

⁶⁴ “garrafinha branca, quem foi que te quebró?” and “aguardente que’eu bebi,” Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 183, 186.

The lyrics sung by Gonzaga and Silva frequently included references to the Catimbó ritual itself. Self-referential terms included *mesa* (table), *velas* (candles), *jurema* (the tree or its derivative hallucinogen); *princesa* (the “princess” bowl); and *portas* (doors granting access to the spirit world). The songs also had a great deal of overlap in the local flora cited, which the singers recognized as important ingredients for herbal remedies: the oil palm, lemongrass, rosemary, and various flowers. Finally, the tunes referred to the geography of the Catimbó spiritual world, including holy cities such as Aguas Tintas, Juremá, and Vajucá. The mythical cities mentioned by Gonzaga overlapped with those mentioned by Silva; only the pronunciation changed (Vaücá to Vajucá; Jurema to Juremá; Arubá to Urubá). These cities are also mentioned in the limited literature on the subject.⁶⁵

Performers also shared a loose notion of a common cast. In the three performances, the informants sung more than sixty songs to invoke various *mestres*, or spiritual masters. Three of the same *mestres*—Mestres Inácio, Carlos, and Antonio—were invoked at different sessions. An additional *mestre*, Malunginho, was mentioned in two performances, but only directly invoked in one.

All three performers invoked Mestre Carlos, suggesting each performer agreed that a ceremony would not be complete without his invocation. Indeed, Câmara Cascudo’s work on Catimbó corroborates this idea, suggesting that Carlos is “highly-well known in any and every session of Catimbó.”⁶⁶ Two of the three performers knew enough of Catimbó culture to also recite the biographical poem of the Master:

⁶⁵ Bastide, *African Religions*, 178-183.

⁶⁶ “conhecidissimo em qualquer sessão de Catimbó.” Câmara Cascudo, *Meleagro*, 155.

“Master Carlos was a great Master
Without a teacher he learned the ways
At the trunk of the jurema tree,
Knocked out cold for three days
Then he got on his feet to
Heal the sick and take pains away.”⁶⁷

The poem was known not only locally to these performers, but also regionally to folklorists and poets. Modernist poet Ascenso Ferreira even parodied these lyrics in his own poem, predictably entitled “Catimbó.”⁶⁸

Catholic figures also appeared in the Catimbó songs, suggesting all performers agreed that Catholic saints held their place in the syncretic religion. St. Anthony, believed to help young adults get married, appears syncretized with Mestre Antônio. Silva confirmed this was the same St. Anthony of Padua from Catholic hagiography by mentioning the saint’s birthplace: “My St. Anthony of Lisbon / where do you stay? / In the fallen house / across the bay.”⁶⁹

Each performer invoked a spirit resembling the Catholic Virgin Mary. Gonzaga invoked Mestra Antônia with a song discussing the host and chalice—elements of the Eucharist. He then called the mistress “The mother of God, the Rosary, and the Mother of our Savior.”⁷⁰ Xavier’s tune to the Virgin Mother was unsurprisingly unoriginal, praising her for “defending from all those no-good spirits.” At least his name for her—Our Lady of Beauty—was creative.⁷¹ Finally, Silva invoked Mestra Angelina with the lines, “We

⁶⁷ “Mestre Carlos era bom Mestre / Que aprendeu sem s’insiná / Três dias levô caído / No ramo da Juremá ... Quando se alevantô-se / Foi Mestre pra curá.” Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 178, 209.

⁶⁸ Ascenso Ferreira, *Catimbó; Cana Caiana; Xenhenhém*, (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2008).

⁶⁹ “Meu Santo Antônio di Lisboa / Onde é tua morada? / No outro lado do rio / Naquela casa caiada.” Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 158.

⁷⁰ “Mãe de Deus, do Rusário, Mãe de Nosso Salvador,” Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 102.

⁷¹ “defendê-te de tud’os isprito vagabundo.” Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 207.

pray, we pray to our father and our mother Mary the most holy.” The rest of the song contained references to the Christ and ended with a resounding “amen.”⁷² The presence of the Virgin Mary throughout the ceremonies suggests the performers recognized the Virgin Mother held an especially important role in a ritual that held as one of its core purposes to console or cure its patrons.

Form

Performers demonstrated an understanding of form particular to the Catimbó ritual in both the construction of their songs, and in the organization of their broader ceremony. Songs were similar in form, especially in the case of the first two performances in which the singers had a broader cultural knowledge than Xavier. Almost every verse of the toadas by Gonzaga and Silva features an ABCB form. The couplets tend to rhyme on the last syllable of the line. Silva’s toada to Mestre Menino is representative:

*O menino ‘sta chorando
Lá na torre di Belém.
Cala a boca, meu filinho,
Que tua mãe logo vem!*⁷³

The young boy is crying
In the tower of Bethlehem
Close your mouth, my child,
Your mother will soon come in!⁷⁴

⁷² “Ôremos, ôremos a nosso pai e nossa mãe Maria Santíssima.” Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 181.

⁷³ Carlini, 149.

⁷⁴ Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 149.

Gonzaga's toada to Mestre José da Cruz is similar:

*Cruzeiro, cruzeiro
Cruzeiro di Juremá!
Tantu trabalho por bem,
Comu trabalho por má*

The Cross, the cross
Jurema's cross!
I'll work for your gain
Or I'll work for their loss.⁷⁵

In a variant of this form, the stanza included a brief parenthetical phrase between the third and fourth line, creating the form: ABC(d)B. Gonzaga's toada to Mestre Luis Inácio contains the variation:

*O dia vem amanhecendo
E o sol já vem raiando.
Sô Mestre Fulô de Amêxa,
(Reis um rei),
Na Mesa já vai chegando*

The day is starting,
The sun is rising
I am Master Fulô de Amêxa,
(king of kings)
To the table he is coming.⁷⁶

The singers tended to place the rhyming syllables on the downbeat of a new measure, giving further emphasis to the rhyme. Performers had some notion, then, not only of the

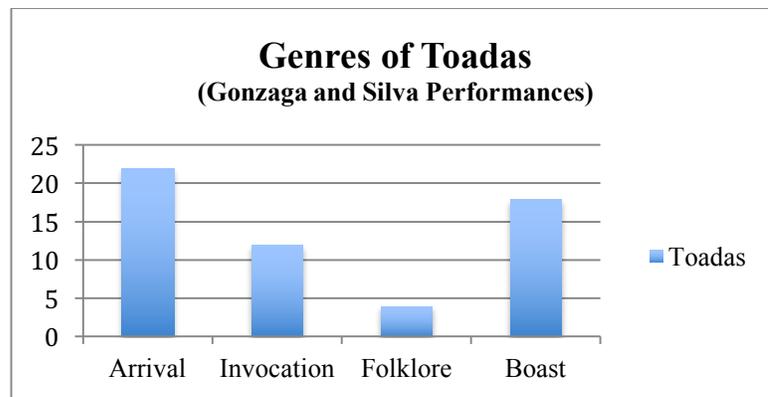
⁷⁵ Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 100. The words "tantu" and "comu" are misspelled, in accordance with how Oneyda Alvarenga chose to transliterate the recordings in the 1940s. See Alvarenga, *Catimbo*. Her choice to transcribe pronunciation "errors" as she heard them was likely a direct result of her training under Dina Levi-Strauss, who taught that students must notate "phonetic orthography" and "translate word for word" the stories shared by their informants. Aula 13, SEF microfilm, roll 1, CCSP. The phonetic transcriptions, however, have the effect of implying the illiteracy or ignorance of the informants in way similar to the 'dialect' writing of many of the WPA slave narratives recorded in the United States in the same decade.

⁷⁶ Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 99.

appropriate form for a Catimbó song but also of its proper rhythm. Sticking to this form further provided set parameters for cases in which verses were improvised.

Gonzaga and Silva demonstrated an understanding of the different genres of toadas. Every tune sung by these two performers can be classified in one of four genres: Invocation (for help); Annunciation (of arrival); Festivities/Folklore; or the Boast.

Figure 4.1. Genres of Toadas, Gonzaga and Silva Performances



The existence of the latter two genres suggests that the performers had no problem with mixing in popular secular music styles into their religious performances. Various toadas contained verses that appear to have been pulled from popular folklore. Consider the latter verses that Silva added to the traditional Mestre Carlos toada:

“I’m lovin, I’m lovin
 Leaf from the oil palm tree
 I’m lovin a married woman
 and the husband don’t know about me

I’m lovin’, I’m lovin’,
 Lemongrass leaflets
 I’m loving the woman
 With the curly ringlets.”⁷⁷

⁷⁷ “ ‘Stô amando, ‘stô amando / A folhinha do dendê / ‘Stô amando uma casada / Sem seu marido sabé.

The boast, in turn, is a central part of Northeastern popular music genres such as *repente*. Anthropologist Elizabeth Travassos has studied these genres in the state of Paraíba. Travassos describes boast-genre lyrics as “fictitious exploits told in Hyperbole.”⁷⁸ The boasts of the Catimbó toadas follow this same logic, ranging from bragging of legendary power to retelling of infamous acts. One common opening to these Catimbó boasts is the phrase “Eu sô aquele que...” meaning “I am the one that...” then followed by feats allegedly accomplished by the spiritual master before he died. In the case of the malevolent spiritual masters such as Zé Pelintra, the boast recounted an exaggeration of crimes committed:

“I killed father and killed mother,
 shot godmother and godfather down,
 Killed a blind man that had taken a seat,
 and a cripple hobblin’ around.”⁷⁹

The Catimbó performers not only borrowed the boast genre, but also pulled from *repente*’s style of improvisation. As a form of audience interaction, *repente* performers improvise lines referring to the crowd. This can range from simple observations about events going on during the performance—a man flirting, a rooster crowing—to jokes making fun of one or more listeners. The ethnographers saw this clearly in their secular

‘Stô amando, ‘stô amando / A folhinha do capim / ‘Stô amando uma morena / Do cabelo pixaim.” Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 178.

⁷⁸ Elizabeth Travassos, “Ethics in the Sung Duels of North-Eastern Brazil: Collective Memory and Contemporary Practice,” *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*, 9, 1, Brazilian Musics, Brazilian Identities, (2000): 61-94. There are different names for what amount to overlapping genres. Travassos specifically analyzes *cantoria pe-de-parede*, when two musicians head off in an all-night musical duel that traverses various lyrical forms and genres. The term *repente* (improvisation) is a synonym for the *cantoria* genre, and the *desafio* (the challenge) is a crucial part of the event, in which the musicians face off in a challenge of wits, rhythm, and rhyme. Other regions use the term *embolada* (lyrical tongue-twisters) instead of *repente*.

⁷⁹ “Matei pai e matei mãe / Matei padrin’ e madrinha / Matei um cego assentado / E um alêjado no caminho.” Carlini, *Cachimbo*, 165.

recording sessions with performers of a *coco-de-embolada*, a variant of the repente genre.

In a particularly memorable song, José Tomás de Assis sang:

*Saúdi du pessoá.
Quem 'ta pidindu sou eu.
Foi uma pena lavada,
quem essi côco iscreveu.
Eu não sei si vou m'imbora,
a tod(u) eu peçu licença.
Seu Pachecu um 'iscrição,
fromadu na cumpeteça,
seu Pachecu, pra sê dotô
istudô na capitá.
I não si ordenô,
pruque não quis si ordená.*

Health to my audience,
I ask for my time.
It was a clean quill
that penned this *coco*'s line.
Don't know if I'm leavin',
To all I'll ask permission.
Mr. Pacheco, a [de]'scription,
He's the competition,
Mr. Pacheco, to get brain'd,
To the capital he went.
And he didn't get ordained,
'Cuz that just wasn't his bent.⁸⁰

The singer began the verse in a traditional manner: saluting his audience, and then asking for a chance to sing (“I ask for my time”). He then began to poke fun at Benedito Pacheco, the ethnographer running the recording equipment. Tomás de Assis drew attention to Pacheco’s position of privilege, living in the “capital” (São Paulo), allowed him to receive a formal education. If the singer felt at all intimidated by the social

⁸⁰ The translation closely matches the original rhyme scheme, but not the meter: “Saú(d)i du pessoá / Quem 'ta pidindu sou eu / Foi uma pena lavad(a) / quem essi côco iscreveu / eu não sei si vou m'imbora / a tod(u) eu peç(u) licença / Seu Pachecu um iscrição / fromad(u) na cumpeteç(a) / seu Pachecu, pra sê dotô / istudô na capitá / i não si ordenô / pruque não quis si ordená.” Sung by Jose Tomás de Assis, Song 419. In Oneyda Alvarenga, *Música Registrada Por Meios Não-Mecânicos* (São Paulo: Departamento de Cultura, 1946), 302-4.

difference, he may have tried to settle the score by playing with masculinities. By closing with a reference to ordination, Assis may have been raising the question of why the young ethnographer was single and traveling instead of married and tending to his family.

The rhyme scheme in the English translation, which loosely reflects the original Portuguese, does not mean that the verse had been pre-written. Rather, it is a product of a musical culture in a region where performers are trained to improvise long verses while staying within the parameters of specific rhyme schemes. This permits singers to interact with the audience without sacrificing the traits that define the genre. The Catimbó performers, too, improvised songs and referred to their audience without seeing this as compromising their performance.

Silva's ceremony included multiple references to the "Boys from São Paulo" (*Rapaziada de São Paulo*). At first, this was simply a line Silva's wife threw in when the spirits asked why they had been summoned. The assistant proceeded to intercede for the ethnographers, reporting she had summoned the spirit to help the São Paulo Boys. Yet as the reference continued, it became less clear if the assistant was still praying on their behalf:

(M=Master, A=Assistant)

"M: We are here in a dangerous service!
A: Yes we are my brother!
M: Ha ha ha ha ha!
A: Everything is coming!
M: It's not a big deal, my little sister!
A: It's the Boys from Mr. São Paulo!"⁸¹

⁸¹ "M: Antão istamos aqui num serviço pirigoso! / A: Tamos, irmão! / M: Há há há há! / A: Tudo aparece! / M: Num tem nada não, irmazhina! / A: A rapaziada do Sinhô São Paulo!" Field book 9: 21-24; Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 132.

In another prayer, the assistant commented: “This gang that came yesterday..this work..our work..it’s doing bad...”⁸²

Xavier sang a song that blended boast with improvisation: pretending to be Master Hilário, he then alluded to his actual himself as a roadside cripple:

“Here I have cured
The many that have arrived
Giving vision to the blind
And curing many cripples

Many here have arrived
Many poor and incarcerated
But with my presence
He walks away cured.”⁸³

The various debts to the repente genre in the religious recordings suggest performers agreed that drawing from secular genres was fair game in a performance for outsiders. It could also suggest that performers instinctively turned to popular music when at a loss for what to sing. Either way, the common use of the boast genre, folkloric stock verses, and references to the audience demonstrates that laymen across economic strata and geographic region shared a common knowledge of popular music and how it ought to be performed. Furthermore, the layering of secular on top of spiritual form shows that none of the performers felt the two spheres needed to remain isolated. For the Catimbó singers, musical performance was part and parcel of performing religion.

⁸² “Este é a rapaciada que veio ontem...um trabalho...nosso trabalho..está fazendo má, à presença divina im nome de Deus poderoso.” Alvarenga, *Catimbó*, 136.

⁸³ Eu aqui tem curado / muntos que tem chegádo / dando vist’a cégo / i curando munt’alejado // Aqui já tem chegado / muntos pobe encarcerado / mais com mia presença / ele sai daqui curádo. Field book 5: 157. CCMPE.

Recursion

For linguists, recursion generally refers to a case in which a small phrase can be used as a building block for something larger. This is the notion of recursion most identifiable in the Catimbó sessions, in which recursion occurred in speech, melody, and rhythm. The mathematical concept of recursion—in which a process calls for the re-initiation of that same whole process—was visible here only in the sense that Gonzaga and Silva frequently ended songs on the dominant note of the scale, which then musically invoked the repetition of the whole song.⁸⁴

Lacking the props, budget, and time available to Gonzaga, the other two performers relied on spoken formulas to get through their performances. For Silva, this took the form of a singing a toada, then engaging in a conversation with his wife, acting as assistant. She played the role of intercessor, praying to the visiting spirit on behalf of an imaginary consultant. The conversation took this form:

M: Hum! May God keep you, little brother!

A: God keep you, my father!

M: For what have you called me here?

A: In order to plead in God's name on behalf of my brother here with me and in the divine presence of God almighty. Best of help for this matter, which which is in the presence of the Lord.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ In concert and commercial music, dominant chords are those that present a musical tension resolved by returning to the tonic, or foundational note, of the scale. Even in unaccompanied singing of popular melodies (the case of the Catimbó sessions) the dominant note has a relationship with the tonic so intimate that it makes it pleasing on the ear to hear this transition. Since folkloric melodies frequently start on the tonic, however, the resolution is frequently an invitation to start the song all over again.

⁸⁵ “Mestre Carlos era bom Mestre / Que aprendeu sem s’insiná / Três dias levô caído / No ramo da Juremá ... Quando se alevantô-se / Foi Mestre pra curá.” Carlini, *Cachimbo* 148.

The conversation changed slightly throughout the course of the ceremony, as the assistant would alternate rote phrases such as “All of us with God” or “May God add his divine light, in the name of God Almighty!”

Repeating this process with some twenty deities, Silva was able to present his performance as a complete ceremony. Xavier, however, had to rely instead on repetition of short phrases in order to extend what was already a scant repertoire. He chose to chant a short prayer at the beginning and end of each song, in order to lengthen the tune and provide continuity. Then within each song, he took short phrases such as “I am on the mountain” or “My little measure [of the jurema drink]” and sang them at the beginning of each line, effectively doubling the length of each tune.

Recursion also occurred with melodies in at least two cases. This means that the performer used the same melody on more than one occasion. In the case of the toadas transcribed in Figures 4.2 and 4.3, Silva used the same melody to invoke Zé Pelintra as he did to invoke Mestre Carlos. He simply switched the lyrics and the names of the spirits. The transcriptions shows that the melodies are almost identical in all but the sixth and seventh measures, which in Figure 4.3 is basically a repetition of the second measure of the “Mestre Carlos” toada. Then in terms of rhythm, differences occur only to adjust for varying word length.

Figure 4.2. “Zé Pelintra” Toada, Laurentino da Silva



Figure 4.3. “Mestre Carlos” Toada, Laurentino da Silva



The recursion of melodies, however, was intra-ceremonial, never inter-ceremonial, meaning that the different performers did not share a common knowledge of specific melodies. Even in the case of the toada for Mestre Carlos—in which the lyric was known by two of the three performers—the melodies are all distinct. This means that, while the biographical poem about the master was known throughout the region, the corresponding song (if there ever was a specific one) was not common knowledge.

There was, however, overlap in rhythmic cells, suggesting performers shared a common notion of popular rhythm. A rhythmic cell is a short rhythmic phrase lasting just a measure or two. In most of the Mestre Carlos tunes, the rhythm  can be found. Gonzaga and Silva used the rhythm clearly and consistently. The less-knowledgable Xavier, who relied chiefly on the simplistic , was still able to toss

in a rhythmic cell (♩♩♩♩) approaching (albeit inverted) the cell used by Gonzaga and Silva.⁸⁶

Mestre Carlos, of course, did not hold a monopoly on that rhythmic cell; such syncopation has long been common in Brazilian popular music. By the late 1920s, Mário de Andrade had himself recorded the same rhythmic cell in popular music genres *coco* and *desafio* in the Northeastern states of Pernambuco and Rio Grande do Norte.⁸⁷ The rhythms suggest that the better performers, with a greater sense of musicality, recognized and reproduced local and regional rhythms as they sung, employing the rhythmic cell as they performed.

Conclusion

In the case of the Catimbó sessions, musicians used mnemonics, rhyme schemes, forms, and stock material to facilitate memory and guide invention. Each performer created a ceremony, and, in some cases, even improvised songs or prayers. But these inventions and improvisations were themselves somewhat structured.

Whereas historians Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger have encouraged scholars to consider the “invention of tradition,” it seems that a parody of the phrase is more apt here.⁸⁸ The Catimbó sessions speak to the “tradition of inventing.” None of the Catimbó performers had working knowledge or memory of the entire religious ceremony. But as they improvised, the performers worked within set parameters of form and script, and used key rhythms, melodies, and prayers recursively. This all suggests a collective

⁸⁶ The transcriptions of the Mestre Carlos tunes can be found in Carlini, *Catimbó*, 114, 178, 205, 209.

⁸⁷ Andrade, *Ensaio*, 117-8; 138-140.

⁸⁸ Hobsbawm and Ranger, *Invention of Tradition*.

memory in 1930s Paraíba, in which musicians, religious initiates, and potentially even beggars understood the link between religious performance and musical tradition.

As the ethnographers traveled through multiple Brazilian states, they carried with them racial assumptions and expectations about the people they would meet there. These ideas predetermined their experience, meaning the ethnographers were able to selectively assemble ample evidence to confirm their prejudices. For the ethnographers, the legitimacy of the Amerindian or Afro-Brazilian performance was not associated with a metrics of training, secrecy, or number of followers. Rather, the measure of legitimacy was the extent to which acts (speech, ritual, or performance) aligned with the anthropological ideas of the primitive mind, such as the magic highlighted by Frazer or the contradictions highlighted by Lévy-Bruhl. Looking for a caricature of primitivity, the ethnographers found it. Gonzaga's decision to have performers dance in a circle with pipes, metal maracás, and toy bow-and-arrows may have appeared a travesty to priests in the region. But it confirmed for the ethnographers their own pre-conceived ideas of primitive psychology and their narrative of national identity: that Amerindians, Africans, and Europeans had contributed to founding Brazil in a primitivity still alive in the Northeast, but present only in custom and superstition in souther cities such as São Paulo.

The scholars believed they needed to document this primitivity to understand Brazil's national psychology. They also collected artifacts and recorded music in hopes of inspiring the production of national Brazilian art and music. Artifacts, melodies, and rhythms from previous such trips had, indeed, served as reference points for Brazilian modernist artistic production. But the 1938 ethnography trip reveals that such artistic production was not directly rooted in, say, performance traditions of Paraíba, but rather in

primitivist representations of a homogenized Northeast, complete with value judgments regarding race, religion, and region. The DC&R commissioned symphonies that set these representations to music. They then broadcast these musical narratives to teach the nation about the promise of social harmony and warn of the dangers of unchecked primitivity. It is to those symphonies this dissertation now turns.

CHAPTER V

Performing the Symphony of State: The Congress for Singing the National Language

Introduction

Chapters 1-4 have attempted to explain how elite scholars, artists, and political leaders in São Paulo came to subscribe to a belief in a Brazilian primitive mentality. This framework not only justified the social hierarchies keeping them in power but also presented the possibility of a new route to modernity, based on the use of the arts to unify the community and educate the masses. This resulted in various musical projects designed to promote social harmony throughout São Paulo, increase productivity among workers, and minimize labor revolts. The framework also shaped the way São Paulo's ethnographers interacted with communities in the Northeast and then overdetermined the conclusions the scholars drew from these interactions. But even before the 1938 ethnography trip, musicians in São Paulo had applied this same framework to the music they composed, believing national music needed to reflect the nation's primitive mentality. As they composed, they sounded out primitivity through rhythms, melodies, and instrumentation. Within the music, they also imbedded lessons about the importance of respecting hierarchies to maintain social harmony. São Paulo's DC&R then promoted these compositions to musicians and music educators across the nation. The works testified to the DC&R vision of how a primitive Brazil could be brought into harmony.

This chapter opens with an examination of a week-long congress in July 1937 hosted by the DC&R for the leaders of Brazilian music education. In the mornings, conference attendants cooperated on a research project dedicated to standardizing the

pronunciation of Brazilian Portuguese. While the project aimed to improve the singability of the language, it was itself rooted in ideas of national psychology. The daily discussions allowed São Paulo's music leaders teach the rest of the group the paradigm of a shared national mentality that could be unified through collective singing. In the evenings, the music educators attended concerts by the DC&R's various music groups. As the chapter's music analysis demonstrates, the performances served to demonstrate to educators that nationalist concert music could be composed and performed to improve social and racial harmony across the nation. In sum, the presenters intended the conference to model a new educational method based on the use of music for a psychological intervention in Brazil.

The music analysis that closes the chapter attempts to demonstrate the benefits of combining historical methods with musicology. The analysis of the symphonic poem *O Rei Mameluco* by João Souza de Lima and the ballet *O Maracatu de Chico Rei* by Francisco Mignone, demonstrate a clear continuity between the DC&R's intellectual project and its musical production. The works also provide a glimpse into the subjectivities of composers, clarifying the hopes and fears they held in relation to the notion of a primitive Brazil. Most significantly, the works reveal that composers held up concert music as a metaphor for society and then explored that metaphor in such a way as to justify paternalism, racial inequality, and social hierarchies. Concert music requires certain instruments to play background roles, letting others take dominant positions to ensure the harmony of the larger group. Composers suggested that social harmony, too, required certain races and classes be subservient to others.

This chapter turns on a variety of sources. Newspapers covered the Congress and reviewed its musical concerts. The *Anais* (Annals) of the event reprinted not only all of the conference proceedings and research papers but also the concert programs, complete with notes explaining the pieces performed.¹ The analysis of the symphonic poem by Souza de Lima relies solely on the conference program, handwritten instructions, and composition notes. The piece has never been recorded. The ballet, however, affords a deeper reading, informed by the handwritten score by Mignone and its 2005 recording by the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra under the direction of John Neschling. Composition notes, a libretto, and newspaper reviews have provided additional information. All parenthetical references to moments of the ballet—given in the form of 00:00 minutes—refer to the Neschling recording.² These sources have been supplemented by personal correspondence, Congress promotional material, DC&R records, and the personal papers of Mário de Andrade.

Common Tongue, Common Mind

The DC&R held the “Congress on Singing the National Language” to showcase its citywide music education project to Brazil’s leading music educators. Toward this end, the department sent official invitations to educators across the country and paid for their round-trip tickets to the event.³ The guest-list featured an all-star cast of more than forty composers and music educators. Brazilian composers Camargo Guarnieri, João de

¹ *Anais do Primeiro Congresso da Língua Nacional Cantada*. Various editors (São Paulo: Editora Departamento de Cultura São Paulo, 1938).

² John Neschling, conductor. Francisco Mignone: *Maracatu do Chico Rei; Festa das Igrejas; Sinfonia Tropical*. Compact Disc (São Paulo: São Paulo Symphony Orchestra, 2005).

³ Amador Florence to Chefe da Seção de Turismo, correspondence, April 24, 1937. DC, caixa 22, AHSP.

Souza Lima, Francisco Mignone, and Frutuoso Vianna took part in the event. The department assured the presence of directors, past and present, of São Paulo’s music conservatory including Samuel Arcanjo dos Santos, Francisco Casabona, and Carlos Gomes Cardim. Conference planners then extended an invitation to founders of conservatories all across Brazil, such as Ernani Braga who had founded the music conservatory in Recife, Pernambuco, and piano teacher Antonio Sá Pereira, who had founded the conservatory in Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul. Influential journalists, music critics, and music historians took part in the event. Finally, with psychological notions undergirding the conference research project, department leaders had reached out to professors of ethnography and social psychology including Arthur Ramos, Anita de Castilho Marcondes Cabral, and Josué de Castro. Figure 5.1 provides a list of the most influential music educators present at the Congress.

Figure 5.1. Select Attendees of the Congresso da Língua Nacional Cantada.⁴

Note: Other composers, including Heitor Villa-Lobos, had been invited to the event but were unable to attend. See José Candido de Andrade Muricy to Mário de Andrade, June 9, 1937. MA-C-CPL5374, Correspondência, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

Attendee	Profession
Samuel Arcanjo dos Santos	Director of São Paulo Conservatory of Drama and Music
Antonio Sá Pereira	Founder of Music Conservatory in Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul; Piano teacher of national renown; Founder of <i>Ariel</i> music magazine; Chair of Musical

⁴ The attendance list is noted in *Anais*, 9-10; Biographical notes come from various sources: Mário de Andrade to Fabio Prado, March 17, 1937. DC, caixa 78, AHSP; *Estado de São Paulo*, July 7, 1937, 8; Dicionário Cravo Albin da Música Popular Brasileira, www.dicionariompb.com.br; Portal da Artes, www.portalartes.com.br; Academia Brasileira de Música, www.abmusica.org.br; Escola de Música UFRJ, www.musicaufrj.br; Martha Furman Schleifer and Gary Galván, eds., *Latin American Classical Composers: A Biographical Dictionary* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

	Pedagogy and curriculum reformer at the National Institute of Music ⁵
Francisco Mignone	Composer; Conductor
Renato de Almeida	Music historian
Luiz Heitor Correi de Azevedo	Music historian
Arthur Ramos	Ethnographer and scholar of Afro-Brazilian culture; Professor
Manuel Bandeira	Modernist poet; Music critic
Guilherme de Almeida	Modernist poet; Journalist
João Itiberê da Cunha	Music critic (RJ)
Renato Mendonça	Elementary school teacher at the Colegio Pedro II and linguist (SP)
Guilherme Fontainha	Pianist, musicologist, music educator, director of Brazil's National Institute of Music (1931); Founder of <i>Revista Brasileira de Música</i> (1934). Published on piano methods for children ⁶
Maria Helena Coelho	Soprano singer
Murilo de Carvalho	Vocal teacher
Anita de Castilho Marcondes Cabral	Educational psychologist in São Paulo; Student of social psychology at USP; later became a professor of psychology at the University of São Paulo ⁷
Jerusa Camões	Actress; one of the founders and directors of the University Theater (Teatro Universitário), which would work closely with the National Union of Students in the years following the Congress (RJ)
Ruth Vianna	Piano professor later associated with Music Conservatory of Niteroi.
Oneyda Alvarenga	Music critic; Head of DC&R Music Library; ethnographer.
Antonieta Rudge	Pianist and piano teacher
João de Souza Lima	Piano player for DC&R (SP)
Francisco Gorga	Piano player for radio and cinema; Professor; Radio producer (SP)
Frutuoso Vianna	Pianist; Composer; Choir conductor; Music professor at São Paulo's Institute of Music and Theater; Professor at São Paulo Conservatory of Drama and Music

⁵ Many researchers at the conference, including Renato de Almeida, Arthur Ramos, and Antonio Sa Pereira published on both psychoanalysis and music. Their publications serve as further evidence of the wider community that shared the belief that music needed to be understood through psychoanalytic terms and recognized for its psychological value in society.

⁶ Guilherme Fontainha also directed the musical expositions at the Brazilian Pavilion of the New York World Fair in 1939.

⁷ Information on Anita de Castilho Marcondes Cabral comes from <http://www.psiquiatriainfantil.com.br>

Francisco Casabona	Pianist; Composer; Music educator; Director of the São Paulo Conservatory of Drama and Music; Founding member of the Brazilian Music Academy (Academia Brasileira de Música). (SP)
Israel Pelafsky	Composer; Piano teacher; Author of piano pedagogy text. (SP)
Jaan Mõlder	Bass vocalist; traveled frequently to perform in São Paulo
Carolina Attanasio	Soprano singer in São Paulo
Camargo Guarnieri	DC&R composer, choral director, and conductor (SP)
Carlos Gomes Cardim	Education reformer in Espírito Santo and São Paulo; Professor of psychology and pedagogy in the São Paulo Escola Normal Secundária; Director of the São Paulo Conservatory of Drama and Music (SP)
Anita Queiroz de Almeida	Singer in Coral Paulistano, would marry Camargo Guarnieri in 1938. (SP)
José Cândido de Andrade Muricy	Music critic, Music historian
Otávio Bevilacqua	Music professor at Rio de Janeiro's National Institute of Music (Instituto Nacional de Música) and Escola Normal; Music critic
Fernando Mendes de Almeida	Popular composer
Eugenia Alvaro Moreira	Modernist; Journalist; Founder of multiple theater groups including the modernist theater Teatro de Brinquedo (RJ)
Alvaro Moreira	Modernist; Journalist; Music critic, Radio personality; co-founder of modernist theater Teatro de Brinquedo
Benevenuto "Nuto" Sant'Ana	Modernist journalist and poet; DC&R archivist; Secretary of <i>Revista do Arquivo Municipal</i> (1934-5); Historian (SP)
Fernando de Azevedo	Education reformer in São Paulo and Rio
Josué de Castro	Anthropology professor in Rio de Janeiro
Cecília Meirelles	Modernist poet, educator, creator of children's library in Rio de Janeiro
Arnaldo Rebello	Piano player and music educator, Rio de Janeiro
Vera Janacópulos	Vocal instructor in São Paulo
Ernani Braga	Composer, Music professor, Choir conductor; Founder of music conservatory in Recife, Pernambuco

Wanting to show the leaders a system of musical education that engaged the city, the DC&R took advantage of the week to show off its myriad projects and musical groups. Visitors watched a musical performance by children from the public playground; attended a play commissioned by the department; and heard concerts featuring the symphony orchestra, choir, trio, and various soloists.⁸ DC&R leaders selected pieces poised to showcase their institution's musical work. Solo works included folkloric songs collected by ethnographers and arranged for the concert hall. Even the symphonies had been recently composed by the department's music leaders.

Beyond this musical showcase, the Congress featured a research component geared towards standardizing the pronunciation of Brazilian Portuguese in song. The project had its motivation in both practical and psychological needs. Practically speaking, the standardization project provided music educators with a resource to help choirs made up of students with diverse accents sing in unison. Good pronunciation while singing is challenging in any language even aside from the difficulties diverse accents introduce. Diphthongs and hard consonants must be softened so as not to fall heavily on the listener's ear, but avoiding such sounds altogether renders lyrics unintelligible. Singers in 1930s Brazil faced the additional challenge of choosing an accent. The Portuguese language features phonemes pronounced distinctly in each of the large country's many regions. By the twentieth century, migration and immigration had been such that, walking down a main avenue in the city of São Paulo, one could hear a single word pronounced a half-dozen different ways. DC&R leaders suggested that a standardized pronunciation system

⁸ The conference agenda is available in *Anais*, 710-721, 745-748. Regarding the theater performance, see "Palcos e Circos," *Estado de São Paulo*, July 10, 1937.

would streamline musical education. Finally, such a systematization would give directors and musicians confidence to perform nationalist music in Brazilian Portuguese instead of filling concert programs with standards from Italian and French repertoires that at times seemed safer alternatives: French and Italian have fewer vowel sounds, and music educators had set patterns for teaching pronunciation technique in those languages.

But the department leaders had a deeper motivation for wanting to help music educators teach students to sing together in Brazil's "national language." Leaders believed in a connection between language and Brazil's national psychology, and they hoped to streamline pronunciation as a way to psychologically unify the nation. These notions are evident in the research papers prepared for the conference and in the pronunciation guidebook produced by the larger group.

Speaking for the DC&R, Mário de Andrade and music librarian Oneyda Alvarenga argued three psychological theses: first, that Brazilian music educators must teach their students to sing with Brazilian Portuguese accents in order to be faithful to (and reflect) Brazil's primitive heritage. Second, that singing with a Brazilian accent would help immigrants assimilate to Brazil's national psychology. Finally, that a standardized accent would help everyone sing together, in turn unifying the community.

Alvarenga's essay argued the need for sung Portuguese to pay tribute to Brazil's primitive heritage. She opened her essay on language by explaining that the Brazilian accent of the masses had a direct connection to the national psychology: "The parlance of the masses...is the most intimate reality, if not of their way of thinking, then at least of

their way of verbal expression.”⁹ Even “the very deficiencies of verbal expression of illiterate people,” she continued, “do not derive from ignorance of grammar or vocabulary, but rather have as their roots a different psychic state.”¹⁰ This “different psychic state” was Brazil’s primitive mentality, and Alvarenga argued it had left its mark on Brazilian pronunciation.

This mark was nowhere stronger than on the “nasalized vowels” of Brazilian Portuguese, sounds including the ão, õe, ô, ã, and so forth. In yet another project of modernist ethnography, Alvarenga had gone to “drink from the fount of the masses [povo]” by studying the vowel sounds on ethnographic discs from across Brazil. She concluded that the “principal amerindian language” Tupi-Guarani “contributed to a share of the nasality of the national language.” They may have also brought their “primitive manner of singing” to “the nasality of our [national] singing.”¹¹ Other shares of nasality came from “rural bumbkins [*caipiras*] and even blacks from the Minas-São Paulo region.” She concluded that Brazilians needed to stop the “denationalizing importation” of foreign pronunciation styles, and instead cultivate “national nasalization” in order to realize a nationalist approach to choral singing that would reflect “true [Brazilian] beauty.”¹²

⁹ “A fala dum povo é porventura, mais que a própria linguagem, a melhor característica, a mais íntima realidade, sinão da sua maneira de pensar, pelo menos da sua maneira de expressão verbal.” *Anais*, 189.

¹⁰ “As próprias deficiências de expressão verbal da gente iletrada, são mais que discutíveis. Elas não derivam da ignorância gramatical ou vocabular, mas afundam as suas raízes num estágio psíquico diverso que as justifica...” *Anais*, 190.

¹¹ “Si a principal lingua amerindia [Tupi-Guarani]...contribuiu para o contingente de nasalidade da lingua nacional, ainda poderá ter contribuido para a nasalidade do nosso canto, a maneira primitiva de cantar dos Ameríndios que conosco se fundiram.” *Anais*, 201-2.

¹² “nasalação nacional,”; “trata-se, efetivamente, de preferir a uma importação desnacionalizadora, uma propriedade tradicional,”; “Só então, em toda a sua magnitude, ha-de se realizar a beleza verdadeira.” *Anais*, 202, 208.

But the vocal tribute to primitivity had to be tempered by elite order. The researchers at the conference worked to create a standardized accent based on that heard in Rio de Janeiro, because the group considered the Rio to have the most “evolved,” “civilized,” and “cultured” accent from across Brazil.¹³ Teaching students across the country to sing with a Rio-accent was paramount to a psychological civilizing project: elevating the national psychology by getting people across the country to speak together in an “evolved” accent.

Teaching the nation to speak in accord would safeguard against division, critical in the face of the linguistic threat (and thus psychological threat) that immigration posed to national identity. It was for this reason that conference attendees lamented that concert hall—“an all-powerful weapon of lessons and models”—had been crippled by immigrant accents. “Portuguese, Spaniards, and Italians, and even Brazilian children of foreigners, emerging numerously on the national stage” brought their terrible accents, “deviating [*desnorteando*] the naturalness and purity of [our] language.”¹⁴ This represented “a grave danger,” because unity of language was not only representative, but constitutive, of the social and political unity that came with a shared national identity.

Throughout the conference, the music educators drew up various resolutions to support their unanimous affirmation that “choral singing socializes man” and that “singing is helpful for good health.” They approved various motions designed to encourage music associations and even the federal government to push for educational

¹³ *Anais*, 13.

¹⁴ “E que quer dizer-se então da quantidade de artistas, Portugueses, Espanhois e Italianos, ou ainda mesmo Brasileiros filhos de estrangeiros, que surgem numerosamente no palco nacional...e que carregiam para a nossa linguagem sons espúrios, sutaques estrambóticos, desnorteando a naturalidade e a pureza da lingua!” *Anais*, 56.

reform that integrated choral singing in primary education across the country.¹⁵ What came of these motions was an enormous project well-documented in the historic record.

The project was the “Canto Orfeônico,” or program of children’s choirs. The music educators began to institute the program starting the very next year, and it would become a federal requirement beginning in 1946.¹⁶ Yet scholars have been unaware of the conference that created the nationwide network requisite for its implementation. Nor have scholars recognized the primitive-mentality paradigm that undergirded the project. Part of the reason for the historiographical disconnect is because the man generally credited as the architect of the national project could not make it to the conference.¹⁷ This was Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos. Under his leadership, the project would become unparalleled in size. The children’s choirs joined together on national holidays, resulting in soccer stadiums packed with more than forty thousand children singing in the “national language.” The children stood together in a project to unify the nation. Above them, directing the choir, stood a man motivated by the belief in music’s power to socialize the nation’s primitive children.

Villa-Lobos explained that choral singing functioned as a psychological unifier, employing the same vocabulary and primitivist-mentality arguments used by the DC&R leaders. This should not come as a big surprise: Villa-Lobos had been involved in the modernist movement since coordinating the musical portion of the Week of Modern Art in 1922 and corresponded with Andrade over the following decade.

¹⁵ “O canto coral socializa o homem” and that “O Canto [e] útil á saúde.” *Anais*, 47.

¹⁶ David Vassberg, “Villa-Lobos: Music as a Tool of Nationalism,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 6, 2 (Winter 1969): 55-65.

¹⁷ José Candido de Andrade Muricy to Mário de Andrade, June 9, 1937. MA-C-CPL5374, Correspondência, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

In his 1941 *Musica Nacionalista* (Nationalist Music), Villa-Lobos argued Brazil was particularly poised for socialization through music because of the primitive mentality found in Brazil's children and broader masses.¹⁸ Echoing Andrade's writings on music, Villa-Lobos explained primitive communities had invented musical practices to order social life. Children too had a primitive mind and thus needed melodies and rhythms for socialization. Folkloric melodies were especially powerful in educating Brazilian children because they "come already impregnated with characteristics of [Brazil's] racial psychology." This resulted not only in "rapid assimilation and retention of the melodies" but would also "cause a spontaneous pleasure" in young singers because of the songs' "ancestral resonances."¹⁹ Not only was this collective singing a "necessity in the life of children" but was also defended by Villa-Lobos as one of the very "foundations of nationality itself."²⁰

Because of Brazil's primitive mentality, musical socialization was the only way forward. Villa-Lobos was explicit about this:

The psychological character of our race, and its process of historic evolution, clearly indicate the path to be followed: only the implantation of music education in the reformed school system, in the form of collective singing, will make it possible to begin the formation of a Brazilian musical consciousness.

¹⁸ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *A música nacionalista no governo Getúlio Vargas* (Rio de Janeiro: Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda, 1941), 34.

¹⁹ "No caso do ensino por simples audição—que geralmente inicia a prática do canto orfeônico—a familiaridade e a identidade com as melodias folclóricas que já vêm impregnadas de características psicológicas raciais, facultam à criança não só uma rápida assimilação e retenção dessas melodias como lhes causa um prazer espontâneo na repetição desses cantos cheios de ressonâncias ancestrais." Villa-Lobos, *Música*, 36.

²⁰ "Nasce aí o hábito do canto coletivo, como uma necessidade na vida infantil...que...passará a constituir um dos alicerces da própria nacionalidade," Villa-Lobos, *Música*, 36.

In other words, Brazilians were not just in a privileged position for musical development; they necessarily needed musical development in order to continue their “process of historic evolution.” Only music could bring Brazil into modernity. The Brazilian masses shared with the youth a “childlike mentality, equally ingenuous and primitive.” They needed a musical socialization to reduce “excessive individualism, integrate [themselves] into the community, ...[and strengthen self-] discipline in front of the demands of the social collective.”²¹

The discursal overlap between the writings of Andrade and Villa-Lobos makes it clear that—contrary to the scholarly tendency to view the prolific composer’s association with the Estado Novo as demagoguery motivated by careerism—Villa-Lobos actively pursued cooperation with the Vargas administration in order to further the modernist project of consolidating Brazil’s national psychology.²²

²¹ “iniciar a formação de uma consciência musical brasileira.” Also, “O canto coletivo, com o seu poder de socialização, predispõe o individuo a perder no momento necessário a noção egoísta da individualidade excessiva, integrando-o na comunidade, valorizando no seu espírito a idéia da necessidade da renúncia e da disciplina ante os imperativos da coletividade social, favorecendo, em suma, essa noção de solidariedade humana, que requer da criatura uma participação anônima na construção das grandes nacionalidades.” Villa-Lobos, *Música*, 9-10.

²² On the cooperation between Heitor Villa-Lobos and the Estado Novo, see David Appleby, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: A Life (1881-1959)* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2002); Gerard Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil’s Musical Soul* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas Press, 1994); Thomas Garcia, “Music and the Brazilian Estado Novo: Getúlio Vargas, Heitor Villa-Lobos and a National Music Education System,” in Roberto Illiano and Massimiliano Sala, eds. *Music and dictatorship in Europe and Latin America* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2009); Ludwig Lauerhass Jr, *Getúlio Vargas e o Triunfo do Nacionalismo Brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Itatiaia USP, 1986); Flávio Oliveira, “Orpheonic chant and the construction of childhood in Brazilian elementary education,” in *Brazilian popular Music and Citizenship*, edited by Idelbar Avelar and Christopher Dunn (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Vassberg, “Villa-Lobos.”

This re-evaluation of Villa-Lobos provides an additional voice to the chorus of scholars suggesting that the cooperation of modernist artists with the Estado Novo was less a case of an authoritarian leader coopting intellectuals, and more a situation in which artists willingly collaborated with an authoritarian regime to realize their own projects. Scholars have begun to recognize this with other modernist artists, but still not with Villa-Lobos. See Milton Lahuerta, “Os Intelectuais e os anos 20: Moderno, modernista, modernização,” in *A Década de 1920 e as origens do Brasil Moderno*, edited by Helena Carvalho de Lorenzao and Wilma Peres da Costa (São Paulo: Editora Unesp Fundação, 1997).

Certainly the Estado Novo provided Villa-Lobos with unprecedented opportunities for recognition and musical opportunity. And indeed, Villa-Lobos' publications during the period ought to be read critically—they were published by Estado Novo's propaganda department. But this discourse was not hollow; it had been carefully pieced together over the previous two decades and validated with scientific language and ethnographic endeavors. The Vargas regime provided Villa-Lobos with the resources necessary to enact a massive program of musical socialization, which he did.²³

The project of collective singing had been assembled and developed in the DC&R choral projects and children's playgrounds of the 1930s. But the DC&R composers simultaneously worked to use symphonic concerts to explore national identity and socialize listeners. Composer Francisco Mignone, for example, explained that "as a social and national musician," he felt responsible to create "work socializing my country." In addition to collective singing, Mignone argued that instrumental pieces functioned socially as long as the composer worked "to choose themes profoundly social, permanent, or symbolic."²⁴

Mário de Andrade explained that instrumental music could effect change on listeners because music worked on both mind and body. Borrowing from turn-of-the-century medical terminology, Andrade labeled as "dynamogenesis" the power of music to influence the physical body, such as in changing the heart rate or inciting muscles to move (dance, walk in step, slow down). He termed as "synesthesia" music's ability to provoke sensations, change emotions, and to trigger images in the mind's eye. As long as

²³ Better treatments include Oliveira, "Orpheonic chant," and Garcia, "Music."

²⁴ Francisco Mignone, *A parte do anjo: autocrítica de um cinquentenário* (São Paulo: ES Mangione, 1947), 48.

the audience listened to program music (music narrating a pre-determined story or describing an extra-musical image), the sounds invited, even “obligated” the viewer to “to have an attitude immediately active and creative.” Audience members would create their own mental image to correspond with the music. As a result of this self-fashioned portrait, each audience member would then take the image to be “absolutely true” and would be the “most moving [image] possible”—meaning maximum emotional buy-in to nationalist narratives. According to Andrade, this made nationalist music a more powerful art form than any other in raising native pride in listeners. It was for this reason that Andrade wrote concert programs and *librettos* (texts designed to be set to music) that reimagined Brazilian history and identity even as they spoke to questions of social and racial harmony.²⁵

Since the final section of the chapter analyzes the music performed at the closing concert of the Congress it is important to explain the context that allows for an interpretation of a text as subjective as a piece of music written for an orchestra and choir. While no historical text of any genre can be reduced to a single, authoritative interpretation, concert music presents a special challenge to the (always unattainable) ideal of objective interpretation, especially in the analysis of portions of music that have no lyrics. Yet interpretation became less subjective with certain types of compositions during the Romantic period. This is because Romantic composers began to create *program music*—music working to portray a specific image or story, with an interpretation agreed upon by composer, performer, and listener alike. Artists developed

²⁵ Mário de Andrade, *Namoros com a medicina* (Belo Horizonte: Livraria Martins Editora, 1980 [1937]), especially 20-1.

onomatopoeic and semiotic techniques to make music function in ways more closely related to language. In cases of onomatopoeia, instruments imitated the cry of a child, the squeak of a closing door, a blast of thunder. In semiotic cases, key musical phrases (*themes*) or brief rhythmic patterns (*cells*) acted as signifiers, with literary characters, landscapes, communities, or historic events serving as referents. Composers using these techniques could then create orchestral compositions narrating stories (called a *tone poem* or *symphonic poem*). The stories, if not readily understandable by the title (such as *Don Quixote*) would then be accompanied by a written narrative or “program” giving listeners pointers as to what key themes to listen for, and when. This became famous after the well-known case of the premiere of Hector Berlioz’ *Symphonie Fantastique* (1830). This “program music” shortly thereafter became frequently used to advance nationalist goals, often by celebrating some national treasure such as in the case of Smetena’s *The Moldau*.

By the 1920s, European composers ceased regularly composing tone poems. Mário de Andrade, however, still wholeheartedly embraced these works in the 1930s. He himself imagined the narratives and wrote programs and librettos for multiple DC&R compositions. This may seem backwards or derivative for the father of Brazil’s modernist art movement. It was and was not. While European vanguard composers turned away from tone poems to embrace musical movements such as serialism and dodecaphonism, Europe’s political leaders continued to rely heavily on performances and broadcasts of nationalist tone poems throughout the first half of the twentieth-century. In other words, program music fell out of style for composers, not for politics. Andrade, himself in a political position, recognized the lack of Brazilian nationalist pieces and chose to incentivize their production. Brazilian musicians had little choice but to follow. Andrade

was in charge of the payroll of three of Brazil's most important composers and of all of São Paulo's best classical musicians. Following Andrade's nationalist project not only ensured employment, it opened the doors for financing of international tours and stints studying abroad.²⁶

The pieces discussed here are not highly regarded by composers today. Only the ballet by Mignone made any lasting contribution to Brazil's concert music repertoire. The following analysis does attempt to champion forgotten pieces. Rather, the investigation suggests that compositional techniques and decisions can be read as indicative of the strategies and beliefs of the composers, and ultimately of the DC&R itself.

Nationalist Narratives

To close the week-long conference, the DC&R organized a final concert demonstrating to music educators how symphonic music could speak to and advance social and racial harmony. Furthermore, with each piece crafted as a retelling of Brazilian history, the concert demonstrated that music could be used to reframe how Brazilian listeners understood and imagined their nation's past. The audience listened to three separate acts: a symphonic poem, a series of solo pieces, and, finally, a ballet featuring orchestra and choir. The program of the symphonic poem is examined first, followed by a musicological analysis of the ballet.

²⁶ See the discussion of Andrade's influence on composer Camargo Guarnieri in Sarah Tyrrell, "M. Camargo Guarnieri and the Influence of Mário de Andrade's Modernism." *Latin American Music Review* 29, 1 (Spring/Summer 2008): 43-63. The extent of Andrade's influence over São Paulo's broader community of professional musicians is very evident in the AHSP and IEB archival documents and personal correspondence.

Entitled *O Rei Mameluco* (the Mixed-blood King) and featuring a program written by Mário de Andrade and music by the department's resident pianist João de Souza Lima, the opening symphonic poem musically narrated Brazil's colonial period. The work reimagined the 1641 São Paulo uprising when the Iberian Union ended and Dom João I of the Bragança House took the Portuguese throne. A group in São Paulo, consisting of mostly Castilian colonists, refused to recognize the new Portuguese king. They asked the region's leader São Paulo's Captain General to instead serve as their sovereign. He declined, and the region accepted the rule of Dom João.²⁷

Lending itself well to poetic revisions, the name of the Captain General, "Amador Bueno," could be translated as "lover of good." Genealogical records suggested the captain's great-grandmother was Amerindian, making him 1/16th indigenous. Andrade took advantage of the incident to recast the Captain as a "mameluco," a mixed-blood member of colonial society.

Andrade's rendition replaced the Castilian colonists with rabble-rousing Indians revolting against colonial order. Amador Bueno became a socially-privileged Indian asked by the rebels to serve as the new king of São Paulo. Unsure where his loyalties lay, Bueno took refuge in the São Bento monastery to pray about what to do. His turning to the monastery itself implied a Christian upbringing and foreshadowed the leader's decision to adhere to Christian social harmony rather than heed the calls of the insurgents. Outside the monastery, the angry Amerindians broke into uproar, screaming

²⁷ Andrade recounts the basic story in his libretto: Mário de Andrade, "Amador Bueno" in the archival folder entitled "Maracatu do Chico Rei." MA-MMA-086, Manuscritos, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB. Other accounts of the uprising can be found in early-twentieth century São Paulo history texts, such as Alfredo Ellis Junior, *A lenda da lealdade de Amador Bueno e a evolução psicologia planaltina* (São Paulo: Editora Obelisco, 1967), and Afonso Taunay, *Amador Bueno e outros ensaios* (São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial do Estado, 1943).

with a “hoarse, deafening” cry and thirsty to engage an “act of savagery.”²⁸ Just in time, from within the church, a Catholic song began to sound. Crescendoing, the religious hymn “pacifies the voracious drive” of the “terrible souls.”²⁹ The angry mob was overtaken by the music and returned home.

The program proclaimed Andrade’s belief that music could prevent revolts and create social harmony. If read as an actual retelling of the colonial experience, the text asserted that music made the colonization process less physically violent. Indeed, Andrade would shortly thereafter write on Brazilian music history, arguing that “the mystical music of the Jesuits” served as the crucial tool enabling “the catechism of the Indian and the concomitant general regimentation [of colonial life].”³⁰ The rose-colored portrayal of Catholics in *O Rei Mameluco* not only muted the violence of the Portuguese colonial project but also argued that insurgents placed their own weapons down upon hearing music, ceding their claims and accepting their inferiority.

His concert program asked listeners to pay attention when the indigenous rebels stepped back, because as the “indigenous [musical] theme quiets down” it would be “transformed” into a “Brazilian march.” At that point, new musical themes would break into the musical landscape. These included melodic fragments from a popular samba, cateretê, and a Bumba meu boi tune. The concert program explained each melody as a color, and suggested that these were “colors more alive...colors more contemporary, *these*

²⁸ “surdo, rouca o despeito torvo na turba.” Also “ronda no ambiente a consolação dum ato de selvageria.” Andrade, “Amador Bueno.”

²⁹ “A calma dos cantos abranda o impeto voraz...a paz necessária se infiltra nas almas terríveis.” Andrade, “Amador Bueno.”

³⁰ Mário de Andrade, “Evolução Social da Musica Brasileira,” in Mário de Andrade, *Aspectos da música brasileira* (Belo Horizonte: Villa Rica, 1991), 16.

are national colors.” (Italics in original).³¹ Musically, the piece suggested that only at the moment in which the Amerindians were overpowered that the rest of “Brazil” could come into being. Indeed, this is consonant with the broader racial narratives woven in and out of Brazil’s modernist movement, providing impressions of a Brazilian national identity constructed by a dying Amerindian bequeathing Brazilians a legacy of sadness, a primitive African giving Brazil its musical prowess, and a European bringing civilization to the nation. But the portrait of national identity presented in *O Rei Mameluco* assumes more immediate relevance if recognized as commentary not on Brazil’s founding myths, but rather on its present political realities.

Andrade likely recognized a relationship between the colonial rebellion and the recent political situation. Written in September 1936, Andrade may have chosen the colonial history to serve as an allegory of São Paulo’s violent revolt of 1932.³² Getulio Vargas had overthrown Brazil’s First Republic just as Dom João I had overthrown the Iberian Union. This earned Vargas the hatred of those living in São Paulo. Residents of the industrial city had, in 1932, turned to weapons and war and spilt plenty of blood before accepting the arrangement. Andrade, disillusioned by the revolt, believed music was needed to bring unity, cooperation, and harmony. He may have even written himself into the play as Amador Bueno, the “lover of good.” That Andrade himself had a mixed racial heritage (which he never publically discussed but made known in his personal

³¹ “O tema indígena vai se acalmando, e de repente, transformado em seu caracter, surge com ritmo mais incisivo e um vigor novo. É um tempo de marcha brasileira que caracteriza o movimento desta terceira parte. Surgem novas melodias que com o tema indígena se entreleçam. Mas são cores mais vivas, são côres mais atuais, *são côres nacionais.*” *Anais*, 749.

³² Andrade, “Amador Bueno.”

correspondence and poetry) allowed him to more easily envision himself as the leader of an historic project using music to civilize and unify the city.

The context of the performance corroborates this reading. The Congress ran from July 7-14, 1937, with that July 9 marking the fifth anniversary of São Paulo's revolt. Since São Paulo's Constitutionalist Party leaders had worked to reframe the revolt as a necessary sacrifice forcing Vargas to capitulate to constitutional rule, the city commemorated the anniversary accordingly. DC&R leaders, themselves ranking members of the party, were well aware of the July 9 commemorations. Furthermore, the DC&R ran booking for the Theatro Municipal and rented the theater out for a solemn commemoration event on the anniversary evening. On that July 9, the city performed a large civic spectacle, reinterring in a local cemetery more than a hundred soldiers originally buried in a battlefield. The ceremony included a funeral procession, burial, and a gun salute. That evening, instead of hosting a concert for the conference attendees, the Theatro Municipal held a civic service in memory of the deceased.³³

It was later that week, in the same room, that Andrade introduced *O Rei Mameluco*. He read the audience the storyline and then paused, asking them: "Could it not be the Brazil of today, a united Brazil, that Amador Bueno foresaw...?"³⁴ Five years later, in an 1942 essay reflecting on the modernist movement, Andrade was more explicit: "I perceive myself made into an Amador Bueno."³⁵

³³ "O quinto aniversario," *Folha da Noite* (São Paulo), July 8, 1937.

³⁴ *Anais*, 750.

³⁵ "Em síntese, eu só me percebo, feito um Amador Bueno qualquer, falando NÃO QUERO e me isentando da atualidade por detrás das portas contemplativas de um convento." (Capital letters in original). Mário de Andrade, *Aspectos da literatura brasileira* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora, 1972).

The story of Amador Bueno spoke to the power of music to entice a primitive city away from rebellion, in the pursuit of social harmony. This harmony, however, meant that São Paulo's historic indigenous populations and contemporary masses alike had to accept a position of inferiority instead of struggling to maintain power. The second piece, on racial harmony, would provide a nearly identical message.

Maracatu do Chico Rei

Composer Francisco Mignone composed the ballet *Maracatu do Chico Rei* (King Chico's Maracatu) in 1933, and premiered it at the Congress's closing concert.³⁶ The analysis of the ballet suggests that composers tried to use the orchestra and choir to sustain a connection between the *musical* concept of harmony and the *social* understanding of harmony in two ways. First, composers employed harmonious chords in scenes of resolution between black and white characters as evidence of the presence or possibility of social harmony among different races in Brazilian society. Second, composers defined certain instruments and melodies as European and then other instruments and rhythms as African. Symphonies then layered the signifiers of Europe above those of Africa while limiting the volume and expression of the latter. This sent the message that whites and blacks could coexist in a beautiful way as long as black communities were willing to subordinate themselves to white authority.

The examination of Mignone's work alongside Andrade's program and instructions for the piece also reveals the extent to which the modernists considered

³⁶ Technically, this was a second premiere, since the ballet had been performed without choir participation in Rio de Janeiro in 1934.

primitivism to be the standard against which music was measured for its national worth. While Souza de Lima's *O Rei Mameluco* presented a cast of primitive and rebellious natives, Mignone set forward a definition of primitivism rooted in blackness.³⁷

Francisco Mignone's ballet enlisted the story of the emancipation of a group of slaves as a metaphor for Brazil's "emancipation" from monarchy in 1889. The ballet is set in front of the *Igreja Nossa Senhora do Rosario* (Our Lady of the Rosary church) in the historic city of Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais. This time, Andrade's narrative drew inspiration from a Brazilian legend of a tribe captured in Africa and taken to Brazil to work as slaves.³⁸ According to the tale, the king purchased his own freedom and managed the extraordinary feat of reuniting with his son. Andrade took much greater liberty, suggesting the king purchased not only his own freedom, but subsequently also that of his wife, son, and entire tribe which, according to this rose-colored narrative of slavery, had not been separated when sold into captivity.

Maracatu begins on a day of celebration, in which the king would purchase the freedom of the last six members of the tribe. The women of the community come before the king and wash their hair in a basin, at which point flecks of gold fill up at the bottom of the tub, providing the king with the means needed to make the final purchase. Implied here is that the women have been working in the gold mines, and that the gold flakes are what they manage to save for themselves. The king uses the money to pay for the last slaves, and the community dances in celebration. This matters because it suggests that Andrade, who wanted to celebrate emancipation, was eulogizing a version of freedom

³⁷ On primitivity in nineteenth-century Brazilian music, see Guzmán, *Native and National*.

³⁸ Mário de Andrade, "Maracatu do Chico Rei." MA-MMA-086, Manuscritos, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

based on purchase through fiscal savings and savvy, rather than via violent revolt or inspired by moral principles: humans are not chattel and freedom ought not have to be purchased.

The presence of primitivity began in the program. Andrade wrote that African celebrations such as this one always featured “a heavy mix of Catholicism with African sorcery” [*feiticismo*, or animist/primitive religion].³⁹ Andrade imagined portraying primitivity visually with exotic costumes for the dancers. The women in the tribe could be dressed with “whatever they had at hand” including fake jewels, feathers, and small mirrors. The king’s son ought to be “nude, with only a silver thong” and the “sorcerer could be almost nude, but with crazy adornments [*enfeites malucos*].”⁴⁰ Although the 1937 premiere had did not end up featuring dancers, the presence of the primitive was quite clear in the sounds and rhythms of the ballet, most markedly in its seventh movement.

Names in the ballet were also significant. The ballet was called a *Maracatu*, which was (and remains today) an Afro-Brazilian procession that symbolically communicated the ritual naming of a black leader as “king” of his community. Andrade had been particularly interested in the ritual because of a small doll, called the *calunga*, carried during the procession. In a separate research article, Andrade called the doll an

³⁹ “Nos dias de festas, festas sempre misturadíssimas de catolicismo e feiticismo africano, os negro vinham em corteja...” Andrade, “Maracatu.”

⁴⁰ “O príncipe samba-eb pode estar nú, só com uma tanga prateada, pra contrastar bem com os outros personagens, excessivamente enfeitados. O feiticeiro também poderá estar quasi [sic] nú, mas com enfeites malucos à...feiticeira.” (Ellipses in original) Note that Andrade always and intentionally misspelled “quase” and other words in order to reflect Brazilian phonetic pronunciation. Andrade, “Maracatu.” Abridged versions of the program appear in *Anais*, 752 and in the first page of the handwritten score: Francisco Mignone, *Maracatu do Chico Rei*. Manuscript score. Reproduced in whole in Priscila Pães, “A utilização do elemento afro-brasileiro na obra de Francisco Mignone,” master’s thesis (São Paulo: University of São Paulo, 1989).

“idol, fetish, a simple object of mystic excitement” that corroborated black primitivity and, more broadly, a general spirit of belief pervading Brazilian psychology.⁴¹ Mignone gave names to the characters in the ballet, beginning with the king of the tribe, whom he named “Chico.” Chico, a nickname for Francisco, was the name Francisco Mignone’s friends consistently called him in personal correspondence. Inserting himself as King of the blacks was likely Mignone’s attempt to imagine himself as a leader in this historic moment, just as Andrade had in *O Rei Mameluco*. Mignone then married his fictional self to “Rainha Ginga,” which roughly translates as “the Queen of Swing.” Finally, Mignone baptized the young prince as “Samba Eb.” The name “Samba” makes the black prince the embodiment of Brazilian musicality, yet “Eb” has no meaning in Portuguese, nor is it a common name. Instead, the name makes sense only if “Eb” is understood as actually “E b ,” referring to the musical note E-flat. Indeed, as explored below, the ballet ends on a dramatic and symbolic E b chord.

Dance of the Six Slaves

Of the nine movements of the ballet, all named “dances” except the introduction, it was the seventh, “Dance of the Six Slaves,” that most clearly featured a musical exploration of primitivity. During this movement the final six slaves came onto the stage, stepping in unison to carry heavy stones to be used in the construction of the Catholic church. They sang a song to stay in common rhythm and not drop the stones. Musically, the seventh movement clearly communicated the suffering of the slaves, but still sketched

⁴¹ Mário de Andrade, “A Calunga dos Maracatus,” in *Estudos Afro-Brasileiros. Anais do Primeiro Congresso Afro-Brasileiro, Pernambuco, 1934*, edited by Gilberto Freyre (Recife: Fundação Joaquim Nabuco, Editora Massangana, 1988).

an image of blacks as primitive. Mignone employed minor-key tonality, unison singing, instrumentation, meter, and lyrics to communicate this message.

The movement conveys suffering first through *harmony*, a term referring to the simultaneous execution of multiple notes to produce chords, which then move from one to another in chord progressions that generally adhere to certain musical conventions. In “Dance of the Six Slaves,” string instruments sustain an A Minor 9 chord throughout the entire movement. Its minor-key tonality conveys sadness, while the added 9th note in the violin and viola parts add a sustained sound. The interval of a major second between the A and the B (the 9th) implies the bitonality that is such a prominent feature in Stravinsky’s ballet *Rite of Spring* (1913), certainly the best known musical example of primitivism. Extended throughout the whole movement, this unresolved dissonance yields an expectation of some final resolution. The resolution would be liberation—not only of the slaves, but of the nation; Brazil declared universal emancipation in 1888 and saw the end of its monarchy in 1889. Setting the stage with this minor tonality, Mignone reinforced the message of suffering by writing “triste” (sad) at the measure in which the singers begin.

Instrumentation and meter reinforce this message. Visible in Figure 5.2, Mignone assigned the opening melody line to the contra-bassoon, allowing the instrument to prepare the way for the choir. When the choir comes in, the bass clarinet takes over the contra-bassoon part. These instruments’ low ranges lend weight to the piece. The Portuguese language, moreover, uses the same term, *grave*, for low sounds and somber scenarios.

Figure 5.2. “Dance of the Six Slaves”
Contra Bassoon Melody, Measure 639 (00:16)

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass, and Contra Bassoon (C. Bass.). The score is for a single measure in 5/4 time. The Violin and Viola parts consist of sustained chords. The Cello and Bass parts play a single note. The C. Bass. part features a melodic line with eighth notes and a dotted quarter note, with accents under the first and fourth beats.

A similar result is effected through *meter*, the term for the number of beats in a musical measure and the conventional accent pattern into which they fall. While most music generally falls into a duple (two or four beats to a measure) or triple meter, the “Dance of the Six Slaves” is composed in 5/4 time (five beats in a measure). This extension of normal musical time throws the listener out of step—an artifice that effectively reproduces the challenge of walking in a group while hoisting a heavy rock. Maybe the rock weighed heavy because it served as stand-in for the weighty institution of slavery itself. In addition, setting melodies to irregular meters such as 5/4 (a combination of a triple and duple or duple and triple measure) is a typical convention in musical primitivism and is often designed to evoke the rustic peasant, particularly in Eastern European and Russian musics.

Andrade asked Mignone to assign the following lyrics to the movement: “Oi diáta, Oi nata / Uanda la iê cosumbo bica?” The phrase came from an Angolan dialect

and meant: “Hey, walk! Ho, carry! Who wants to buy a slave?”⁴² The brief exclamations “Hey, walk! Ho, carry!” made clear this was a work-song. As examined in Chapter 2, Andrade believed music to be a critical force guiding work. Andrade had a fascination with work-songs to the extent that he made special efforts to collect them because they testified to his notion that the arts served a social purpose in society. In cases of groups carrying heavy equipment, singing in unison helped workers accomplish tasks otherwise impossible without teamwork. The final question of the text, “Who wants to buy a slave?” is a cry for freedom, but phrased in such a way that the black slaves alienate themselves from taking agency in their own liberation. Their emancipation depended on the savings of their leader and the mercy of the white slaveowners.

The slaves’ melody [Figure 5.3] further evidences Mignone’s desire to evoke primitivism. Mignone plucked the melody straight from Mário de Andrade’s 1927 handbook on nationalist music, the *Ensaio sobre a musica brasileira*.⁴³ To find the melody, Mignone turned to the section on Afro-Brazilian religious music, and selected the only melody (of a total of four) without Catholic allusions in the text. This was the “Canto de Xangô,” accompanied by Andrade’s explanation that Xangô was the “god of thunder of the black Yorubas,” a people he noted had contributed significantly to Brazil’s slave population. Andrade further noted the melody was an *encantação*, or magic spell. He suggested the piece be performed in rubato, or disregard for strict tempo, since “spells

⁴² “Ôi, caminhar! ôi carregar! Quem quer comprar um escravo?” Andrade, “Maracatu.”

⁴³ Mário de Andrade. *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins, 1962), 104. I am grateful to Priscila Pães for pointing out this connection in her master’s thesis analyzing the *Maracatu*, the only scholarship on the ballet that I have managed to find. Pães, “Elemento afro-brasileiro.”

evade any sort of meter.”⁴⁴ This comment explains Mignone’s choice of expression marks visible in Figure 5.3: the long slurs, the fermatas, and tenuto markings (indicating a note should be held longer than its full time). The expression marks all contribute to a performance highlighting the suspension of normal time. This served as a musical rendition of the contemporaneous scholarly assertion that primitive communities did not pertain to historical time but were condemned to backwardness. This melody also follows another convention for musically depicting characters of a simplistic nature: in mm 643 and 645-646 the melody primarily outlines an A Minor triad, making it very “simple” to sing.

Figure 5.3. “Dance of the Six Slaves”
Central Melody, Measures 643-646 (00:45)

Lento, quase Recitativo

p triste

The musical score is written for a choir on a single staff in bass clef. It consists of four measures. The first measure is in 3/4 time and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The second measure is in 2/4 time and features a half note with a fermata. The third measure is in 3/4 time and contains a half note followed by a quarter note, both with a long slur above them. The fourth measure is in 2/4 time and contains a half note with a fermata. The lyrics are: U - anda__ la__ iê co sum bo bi__ ca Oi dia-ta Oi__ na ta. There are tenuto markings under the notes for 'bi__ ca' and 'na ta'.

Choir

U - anda__ la__ iê co sum bo bi__ ca Oi dia-ta Oi__ na ta

Mignone’s use of meter and rubato to suggest a magical spell outside of clear time worked at cross-purposes with the notion of a work song designed to keep slaves’ steps *in time*. Yet both notions were central to the movement’s construction of primitivity. The tension between the two notions was symptomatic of the modernists’ tendency to string together those notions of primitivity suiting their modernizing project. Here, Mignone constructed a movement that praised primitive music for facilitating cooperation and labor even as it positioned Afro-Brazilians as singers of magical spells out-of-step with a scientific world. This tensions created an ambiguity that extended to the question of

⁴⁴ Andrade, *Ensaio*, 104.

weight in the movement. Was it really the institution of slavery that was grave and heavy, or was it blackness itself that served as its own weight? The second could be deduced since, in the next movement, whiteness was presented as synonymous with weightlessness.

Whiteness as Lightness

Andrade's original libretto suggested the eighth movement be called "Dance of the White Slave Owner and Mistress." Mignone instead named it "Dance of the White Princes." Neither libretto nor personal correspondence offer much information as to the specific scenario of the movement other than that, at this point, the slave owners made an appearance, setting the stage for the purchase of the freedom of the last slaves. Andrade wrote that the appearance of the "white characters" would have the additional benefit of "bringing greater diversity and permit the momentary and restful use of European-style music."⁴⁵ The comment's description of European-style music as *restful* implies the "African" weight of the previous movement would be too much for audiences to handle. Indeed, Andrade had made this explicit in writing about his own experience watching a Maracatu celebration in Recife, Pernambuco: "It was something more violent than can be imagined...I was obligated to remove myself from time to time to...bring order to my blood and respiratory circulation." (second ellipses in original).⁴⁶ The central musical

⁴⁵ "Isso permite ainda o aparecimento de dois personagens brancos, o que trará maior diversidade e permite o emprego episódico e descansante, de música de carácter europeu." Andrade, "Maracatu."

⁴⁶ "Tive ocasião de assistir, no Carnaval do Recife, ao Maracatu da Nação do Leão Coroado. Era a coisa mais violenta que se pode imaginar...Tão violento ritmo que eu não o podia suportar. Era obrigado a me afastar de quando em quando para... pôr em ordem o movimento do sangue e do respiro." (ellipses in original). Mário de Andrade, *Pequena História da Música* (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia Limitada, 1987), 177.

project of the “Dance of the White Princes” was to create a musical association between lightness and whiteness. Lightness—referring here to the absence of weight—musically served as signifier of European culture and white skin color.⁴⁷ This message was communicated musically in instrumentation, form, and articulation.

The dominant instruments in the eighth movement were all of European origin. Furthermore, their registers were higher than the bass instruments featured in the previous movement. Here, the score featured the piccolo, flute, clarinet, oboe, piano, and harp. The contra bassoon was absent from the movement, and the string bass played only a few notes throughout the movement. In addition, Mignone included lines for the concert bells [glockenspiel] and the *celesta*, the musical instrument best-known for its role in Tchaikovsky’s “Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy.” Indeed, the movement evoked weightlessness similar to that of Tchaikovsky’s fairies.

Mignone then communicated gracefulness by crafting the piece in the form of the French Baroque dance called the Gavotte, made famous in the court of Louis XIV. The dance’s characteristic rhythm included an opening on a half measure, followed by one to three full measures, then ending with a sustained note on another half measure. Mignone wrote the word “Gavotte” at the top of the page where the movement began. He then repeated the dance’s standard rhythm throughout the piece [see Figure 5.4].

⁴⁷ The English word “light” conflates the absence of weight with the color white, but the Portuguese weight designation “leve” bears no resemblance to the color “branco” or tone “claro.”

Figure 5.4. “Dance of the White Princes”
Gavotte Figure, Measures 724-728 (00:40)



The use of a traditional court dance genre not only made the movement recognizable as distinctly European but also encouraged the listener to associate Europe with gracefulness.⁴⁸ Alongside gracefulness came agility, musically communicated through steady roulades of quick, light, staccato eighth-note runs played delicately by the flutes, clarinets, and violins, respectively, in the movement’s opening. This was even more present in the middle of the movement (recording 1:27; measures 754-756) where the harp cascades sixteenth-notes in its upper register.

Other aspects of the composition reinforce its lightness: dynamics set at piano through the majority of the movement, the use of pizzicato by the string instruments, and the strolling tempo of $\text{♩} = 88$ (beats per minute). Finally, in the movement’s two transitional moments (first, the build-up to the Gavotte form in 00:29 / measure 717; second, the final lines of the piece), the accompanying instruments are given ascending lines of slurred half notes. These begin with mid-range instruments (bassoon, bass clarinet, clarinet) and are then passed off to the harp, celesta, and flute. The rising line takes the listener further and further away the grounded, low sounds of the slaves’ lament. This ascent, in the composer’s mind, likely emphasized a non-Brazilian European style. Andrade, in multiple publications on music, argued that Brazilian music was

⁴⁸ It is also plausible that Mignone employed the Gavotte to invoke ideas of a court (this was a court dance), and thus of a monarchy. Indeed, the liberation of the slaves in the next movement would be musically manifested in a break from the strict rhythmic confines of the early court dance.

characterized by melodies that always ended in descent, which he chalked up to the weight of the languorous tropics and the presence of the primitive.⁴⁹

The musical construction of whiteness as lightness—especially in the immediate wake of the solemn slave song—hid the fact that the slave owners were the ones ultimately responsible for the weight of the slaves’ chains. Andrade’s prescription to use the “Dance of the White Princes” as comic relief in the midst of the primitivist ballet is further testimony to his belief that primitivity alone was not sufficient for national success. Rather, the Brazilian nation needed an ordering and tuning of its primitive mind. As the final movement attested, such a project required Afro-Brazilian populations to remain in positions of subservience.

Liberation & Harmony

The *Maracatu*’s final movement, “Liberation of the Slaves,” first evokes emancipation, then presents a portrait of racial harmony, and, finally, warns of the danger of an unchecked primitivity. After a brief introduction paraphrasing the ballet’s opening theme, Mignone musically represented the liberation of the slaves (00:28). This occurred in the form of a triumphant recasting of the central melody of the slaves’ lament from the “Dance of the Six Slaves.” Where the earlier melody was played over an A minor, here it is sung over an A major chord, musically signifying the transformation of sorrow into joy, another common musical convention. Mignone then assigned the transformed melody to the horns, instruments historically serving as heralds. Here, the trumpets

⁴⁹. “Genericamente, a sua expansividade impulsiva [of primitive music] se manifesta por livre emissão sonora, com maiores valores dinâmicos no início do canto, e tendência para uma queda do agudo para o grave, determinada pelo cansaço físico.” Andrade, *Pequena Historia*, 18.

proclaim the news of emancipation. Finally, the dynamic marking is set *ff*, or very loud, in order to make freedom's announcement clearly heard. [Figure 5.5]

Figure 5.5. "Liberation of the Slaves"
Liberation Motif, Measures 817-18 (00:41)

The musical score consists of three staves: Trumpet (top), Trombones (middle), and Tuba (bottom). All parts are in 5/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The dynamic marking is *ff*. The music features a motif of eighth notes with accents (>) and triplets (3). The first four measures are in 5/4 time, and the fifth measure is in 4/4 time. The Trumpet part starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth notes, and ends with a whole note. The Trombones and Tuba parts follow a similar rhythmic pattern, with the Tuba part including triplets of eighth notes.

The meter remains 5/4 to remind the listener of the connection back to the slave lament. Yet, in this iteration, the fifth beat no longer feels out of step. Mignone accomplished this first with the faster tempo ($\text{♩} = 132$ as compared to the slave songs' $\text{♩} = 60$). The quicker tempo makes it easier to hear the measure rather than the quarter note as the basic pulse, thereby regularizing the irregularity of the slave song. One interpretation of this could be that freed Africans kept their distinct rhythm and pace in Brazilian society, yet became more mobile. Another would be that African rhythms became assimilated into Brazilian society with the advent of the abolition of slavery and the birth of Brazil as a republic. These were indeed the messages presented in the most celebratory portion of the movement.

The middle portion of the final movement (01:38) features a resolution between the primitive elements associated with Africa and the classical elements associated with

Europe. All of this is encased in an atmosphere of confidence and happiness. The tempo was set at ♩ =104—an “allegretto,” or happy, pace. Mignone additionally wrote in the score: “Tempo de Samba,” or Samba Time.

In the chorus, the singers join together singing “Quizomba quizomba quizomba oi congo, culênga cangola Eh! jongo oi lê lê.” This is not a sentence with any formal meaning. Rather it is a list of African words referring to various dances. As such, the text sketches an impressionistic vision of freed black slaves from diverse nations coming together and celebrating freedom in their own way. But the end of slavery did not provide the black community with social equality. The arrangement attempts to justify this, suggesting that inequality results in greater social harmony.

The section subordinates African instruments and rhythms to European musical arrangements. Four percussive instruments represent Brazil’s African heritage: the *chocalho* (shaker), *reco reco* (scraper), the xylophone, and the timpani.⁵⁰ The *chocalho* was assigned a simple, repetitive rhythm undergirding the chorus rather than overpowering it. In the middle of the section the shaker is replaced by the *reco reco*, at which point the xylophone also joins in, reinforcing the melody. The timpani are completely absent. But this silence is significant. Their absence speaks to a rejection of those parts of Brazil’s African heritage imagined as violent.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Composers in the period may have turned such texts as Luciano Gallet, *Estudos de Folclore* (Rio de Janeiro, C Wehrs & Cia, 1934 [1928]), 59, for a longer list of Brazilian instruments of African heritage. Composers of the period knew that many percussion instruments, including the xylophone, came from Africa. They were generally fine with allowing European drums, especially the timpani and bass drum, to represent the entire gamut of African drums.

⁵¹ See also Marcos Napolitano, “Allegro ma non danzante: O Nacional-Popular em “O Banquete” de Mário de Andrade,” *Latin American Music Review* 24, 1 (Spring/Summer 2003): 126-135, which discusses Andrade’s view that artists needed to cut out from their work what he saw as an African violent excess of rhythm.

Mignone communicated the idea of racial harmony by adapting what he understood to be an African rhythm to a European arrangement. Figure 5.6 depicts the main choral line of this part of the final movement. The melody is set in the following rhythmic cell: . The latter half of that cell () contains an eighth note in the middle of two sixteenth notes. In the period, this was widely purported to be an African rhythm. It featured prominently in popular commercial samba hits of the 1930s, with their catchy  rhythm. Afro-Brazilian songs included in musical texts of the period included the cell, as did typical Brazilian forms such as the *choro*.⁵² The melody featured vocal parts mostly in unison or singing octaves. Since the unison of vocal lines often represents universal agreement, Mignone seems to suggest that society is most agreeable and unified when African elements are subordinated. The composer then concluded the central melody in the traditional progression of European music history's common practice period (1:39-1:48). For Mignone, social harmony required a resolution crafted according to European tradition.

⁵² Gallet, *Estudos*; Andrade, *Ensaio*.

Figure 5.6. “Liberation of the Slaves”
Racial Harmony, Measures 860-864 (1:38)

Up to this point, the *Maracatu* was quite comparable to other nationalist symphonic pieces written in the same period. The tropes were common among Brazilian composers: chronological narratives of Brazilian history, the use of instruments as signifiers for entire races and continents, the “taming” African percussion instruments and rhythmic cells until they became subservient to the broader orchestra, and the musical narration of racial harmony. Heitor Villa-Lobos used them in his 1914–16 *Três Danças Características* and 1918 *Prole do Bebe*; Camargo Guarnieri worked with these tropes in his 1932 *Concerto I* and 1954 *Centenary Suite*; João de Souza Lima employed them in his 1936 *O Rei Mameluco*.⁵³

⁵³ Scholars examining these works include Behague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos*; Gerard Behague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Detroit Monographs in Musicology, 1971); Fabio Dasilva, “Misleading Discourse and the Message of Silence: An Adornian Introduction to Villa Lobo’s Music,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 10, 2 (1979): 167-180; Paulo de Tarso Salles, *Villa-Lobos: Processos Compositivos* (Campinas: Editora Unicamp, 2009); Marion Verhaalen, *Camargo Guarnieri, Brazilian Composer: A Study of His Creative Life and Works* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); José Miguel Wisnik, *O coro dos contrários. A música em torno da semana de 22* (São Paulo: Livraria Duas Cidades, 1977).

But Mignone's work is unusual for its ending. After the racial harmony section fades out, the movement continues for another ninety seconds. The last minute and a half no longer aligns with the libretto or the concert program, which have both ended. Instead, the ballet closes with an unleashing of primitivist musical violence.

The conclusion comes unexpectedly. The choir and strings have already faded out on the tonic of D major. Suddenly, the contrabass and bassoon sforzando (sound a note with sudden force) on the D. This begins an eerie turn back to an unstable tonal center of D Minor. Starting from D, the motif that follows [Figure 5.7] ascends a tritone, the musical interval associated not only with dissonance and violence, but also with the dislodging of tonality. Since tonality is associated with hierarchy, its disruption symbolizes insubordination or revolt. The same motif repeats nonstop, not even taking turns on different instruments. It just gains strength through the use of crescendo and a gradual, yet steady, increase in tempo.

Figure 5.7. "Liberation of the Slaves"
Tritone Motif, Measures 879-880 (2:03)

The musical score for Figure 5.7 consists of two staves: Winds (treble clef) and Bass (bass clef). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and the time signature is 2/4. The Winds part begins with a rest, followed by a sequence of notes: D4, E-flat4, F4, G4, A4, B-flat4, C5. The Bass part begins with a rest, followed by a sequence of notes: D3, E-flat3, F3, G3, A3, B-flat3, C4. The motif is repeated with double strokes, indicated by a wedge-shaped crescendo line below the staff. Dynamics include *sp*, *pp*, and *sff*.

Tension is also increased through a primitive reworking of European concepts. The tritone motif is filled in with double strokes, turning each eighth note into two sixteenths. Playing a repetition of sixteenth-note iterations of the main motif, the woodwinds and strings became percussive. They end up sounding just like the chocalho

and reco-reco of the earlier part of the movement. It is as if the European instruments have been “cannibalized” by Brazil’s African rhythm.

A similar effect is then achieved as the traditional notion of harmony, too, is inverted. Composers in Europe’s common practice period created harmonies by stacking intervals of thirds. This resulted in stable bonds that communicated wholeness and cooperation. But the harmonies in Figure 5.7 are built on unstable seconds, modulating by a grueling half-step from measure to measure. Furthermore, the woodwind’s starting note was an E \flat , just a half-step away from the tonic of the D Minor chord implied by the bass. The result meant not a harmonic world, but rather a world of sonic stress.

The tritone motif is reminiscent of a brief musical theme appearing in the final movement of Stravinsky’s 1910 suite *Firebird*, which also engages primitivism. The suite tells the story of a magical bird which could be both a blessing and a curse to its owner. In the final movement, the protagonist, a young Russian Prince Ivan, celebrates his victory over an evil magician. Yet in the middle of the celebration, instruments cut out to reveal a violin playing a haunting tritone phrase. Luckily for the young prince, the unsettling song is drowned out by the rest of the orchestra, which come flooding back in. Mignone, who indeed was quite honest about borrowing from Stravinsky in composing the *Maracatu*,⁵⁴ may have imagined Brazil’s Afro-Brazilian population as a Firebird of sorts, equally able to bless and curse the young nation. But unlike Stravinsky, Mignone let the tritone motif and its accompanying primitivism take over the ballet.

Building in power, the tritone motif gives way, overpowered not by a triumphant harmony, but instead by the sudden re-appearance of all the percussive instruments of the

⁵⁴ Mignone, *A parte do anjo*, 40.

orchestra. The chocalho, reco-reco, cymbals, and xylophone—invigorated now with the timpani and bass drum—push all the other instruments to the sidelines. Then, as the final measures fall, all the drums join together in downbeat attacks. With each attack, the choir shrieks. The orchestra then holds out a final E ♭ Minor chord and the stage goes black. It was not the Russian prince Ivan who had triumphed, but rather the prince of primitivity, Samba E ♭ .

Was Mignone's ending intended to be an explicit moral lesson to elites? A wake-up call sounding the alarm as to the danger of unchecked primitivity? Maybe. But although audiences definitely understood they were hearing nationalist music featuring primitivist sketches of blackness, few listeners had the ear or insight to interpret the nuances of the piece. Nor did they have the luxury of buying a recording of the piece to listen to repeatedly in their homes, to examine and discuss with friends and family.

So in one sense, the score of the *Maracatu*, speaks less to how São Paulo's public received the piece, and more to the fears, desires, and hopes of São Paulo's composers and the ways in which they perceived reality. Mignone's composition first shows he was pleased with abolition to the extent that it meant an advance for the nation, and an end to widespread suffering. His musical advocacy for racial harmony speaks to a hope and belief in a society that could paternalistically manage its black population in such a way as to create an atmosphere of agreement and cooperation between races. Mignone, along with the broader modernist generation, appreciated primitivist aesthetics. But his *Maracatu* then reveals why elites were so committed to paternalist oversight of the project: they feared that anything else could result in a rejection of hierarchy and a violence akin to that which São Paulo had already experienced.

In the “Dance of the Six Slaves,” the Afro-Brazilians slaves were carrying the stones in order to further the construction of the local church. Since the Catholic church has long served as the very synecdoche of European civilization, it artistically serves as a representation of the broader city. As Andrade had made clear, this was a work-song; only by singing could the slaves maintain the unity necessary to construct the city. Andrade, in his first book of poetry on São Paulo, back in 1922, had finished the introduction with these words:

Singing to the accompaniment of the complex lute that I have constructed, I strike out through the wild jungle of the city. Like primitive man, at first I shall sing alone. But song is an engaging fellow: it gives rebirth in the soul of another man..to the same lyric state provoked in us by joys, sufferings, ideals. I shall always find some man or some woman who will be rocked in the hammock of the libertarian cadence of my verses. At that moment, a new, dark and bespectacled Amphion, I shall make the very stones rise up like a wall at the magic of my song.⁵⁵

Andrade and Mignone might have imagined themselves as helping construct their nation in writing pieces such as the *Maracatu*. If so, it seems accurate that the workers of the ballet were still in chains.

Conclusion

In working with the DC&R, Mignone was joined by fellow composers João de Souza Lima and Camargo Guarnieri. Together with the Rio-based Heitor Villa-Lobos, these three were among Brazil’s most important nationalist composers. Their music, of course, never came close to enjoying the success or audiences achieved by commercial

⁵⁵ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City (Pauliceia desvairada)*, translated by Jack E Tomlins (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1968).

singers hitting radio waves across Brazil in the 1930s and 1940s. But the works did still receive some attention, and were indeed significant among elite circles. The 1937 concert that closed the Congress packed the Theatro Municipal, which sat an audience of over 1,500.⁵⁶ These same pieces were played on multiple occasions in both São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro's municipal theaters. Mignone later toured both his *Maracatu* and Souza de Lima's *Amador Bueno* throughout Italy and Germany in the late 1930s.⁵⁷ While performances were mostly frequented by middle and upper class audiences, the DC&R's initiatives to offer affordable concerts on a regular basis no doubt resulted in a slight expansion of the social groups able to attend.

Newspapers suggest that the ballet was well-attended and well-received. Constitutionalist-Party advocate *O Estado de São Paulo* offered the best reviews of the concert, saying Mignone had achieved "a work of grand proportions."⁵⁸ Multiple papers commented that the Theatro Municipal had been "packed past its limits" and that the piece received "exulting applause."⁵⁹ Yet the dailies themselves devoted little space to the event. Readership seems to have much more interested in political events and sports than in music reviews.

Only Rio de Janeiro music critic João Itiberê da Cunha took ample time to review the *Maracatu*. Cunha had been present at the 1937 concert, having received a paid trip to

⁵⁶ Multiple newspapers noted the high attendance of the closing concert for the Congress. "O Concerto de Encerramento," *Folha de Manhã* (São Paulo), July 15, 1937; "Artes e Artistas," *Estado de São Paulo*, July 15, 1937.

⁵⁷ Liddy Mignone to Mário de Andrade, April 22, 1938. MA-C-CPL2005, Correspondência, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB; Liddy Mignone to Mário de Andrade, May 12, 1937. MA-C-CPL1999, Correspondência, Fundo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

⁵⁸ "Artes e Artistas," *Estado de São Paulo*, July 15, 1937.

⁵⁹ "O Concerto de Encerramento," *Folha da Manhã* (São Paulo), July 15, 1937; "Artes e Artistas," *Estado de São Paulo*, July 15, 1937.

the conference. He did not, however, review the ballet until two years later, in the wake of its performance in Rio at which point the ballet was finally realized with dancers, costumes, and a set. On the day of the 1939 performance, Cunha published the ballet's libretto in his daily music column, followed by the comment that the *Maracatu* was "a piece truly representative of modern Brazilian music."⁶⁰ The following day, Cunha wrote the *Maracatu* featured a "score rich in barbaric colors and rhythms." He further stated the barbarism of the piece was "natural" given the storyline was of a "tribe of blacks" that kept alive their "African traditions, full of noisy fetishist manifestations." This made sense to Cunha, since he believed that, historically, slaves had not yet had the time necessary to "clean themselves" [*se polir*] in the "serene forgiveness of Christianity."⁶¹

The second half of the piece focused on the dancing more than the music, revealing a more denigrating attitude toward the presence of the primitive in Mignone's composition. Cunha lamented the ballet was "purely African," giving room only for one "fortuitous episode" featuring white characters. The critic summed up the piece as an "exaltation of the emotional qualities of the black race and their foolish ingenuity [*fatuidade ingenua*]."⁶²

Cunha's biggest fears regarded how the dance would be viewed by foreign eyes.

According to the critic, the "chaotic dancing of the black [characters]" was "absolutely

⁶⁰ "é obra devéras significativa da música moderna brasiliense." João Itiberê da Cunha, *Correio da Manhã* (Rio de Janeiro), July 8, 1937, 7.

⁶¹ "Mignone escreveu para o 'Maracatu de Chico-Rei' uma partitura riquíssima de coloridos e de rythmos [sic] barbaros, como é natural, tratando-se de uma tribu de negro que ainda mantém tão viva as suas tradições africanas cheias de ruidosas manifestações fetichistas e que ainda não teve quasi tempo de se polir na indulgência serena do christianismo." João Itiberê da Cunha, "'Maracatu de Chico-Rei' de Francisco Mignone." *Correio da Manhã* (Rio de Janeiro), July 9, 1939, 5.

⁶² "Constitue elle a exaltação das qualidades affectivas da raça negra e também da sua fatuidade ingenua." João Itiberê Cunha, "Ainda o 'Maracatu de Chico-Rei' de Francisco Mignone." *Correio da Manhã* (Rio de Janeiro), July 11, 1939, 5.

inappropriate for exportation and for propaganda related to Brasil.” Cunha believed that foreign countries held a “stubborn desire to judge [Brazil] as an extension [prolongamento] of Africa.” He felt afraid that foreign viewers would see the dance and imagine that this was how all Brazilians danced, even in “gardens of the Guanabara palace!”⁶³

Historian Courtney Campbell has recently demonstrated that Brazilian elite’s attitudes on race were contingent on geographic scale.⁶⁴ She shows that on local and national levels, elites could be proud of black contributions to society, especially to the extent that achievements by blacks could reinforce the myth of racial harmony and a national identity based on the notion of a triumphant miscegenation experience. But the same stories championed at home could be downplayed or hidden from foreign eyes. This notion helps account for Cunha’s ability to praise Mignone’s composition as “perfectly calculated” and the orchestra’s performance as giving “maximum splendor” in the same article in which he warns of the dangers of taking the ballet abroad.

Campbell’s argument regarding scale serves as a reminder that what appears as a set of contradictions may actually be a coherent notion that is just highly situational. For Cunha, the attitude toward a primitive piece shifted based on what audience he envisioned hearing the piece. For the leaders of the DC&R, the attitude toward

⁶³ “A balburdia dansante das pretas e dos moleques, das macotas e das mucambas, tornam este episodio absolutamente improprio para exportação e para a propaganda das coisas do Brasil...Se já existe no estrangeiro o prurido contumaz de nos julgar um prolongamento da Africa, podemos facilmente imaginar o que succederia com semelhante bailado...Seriam capazes de apresental-o como um especimen das nossas dansa familiares, situando-o até nos jardins do palacio Guanabara!” João Itiberê Cunha. “Ainda o ‘Maracatu de Chico-Rei’ de Francisco Mignone.” *Correio da Manhã*, Rio de Janeiro, July 11, 1939, 5.

⁶⁴ Courtney Campbell, “The Brazilian Northeast, Inside Out: Region, Nation, and Globalization (1926-1928),” PhD Dissertation (Nashville: Vanderbilt University, 2014); Courtney Campbell, “Race and Radical Politics: New Directions from Brazil,” *Conference of Latin American History*, Atlanta, GA, January 9, 2016.

primitivism was not just about audience. Nor was it just about time: these leaders were not waxing poetic about a primitivist past because they believed its danger had since past. Instead this community of educators, artists, and political leaders viewed primitivity as a problematic Brazilian reality that could nonetheless be worked through to the ultimate benefit of the nation.

The Catholic notion of original sin may provide an appropriate analogy of primitivity as the DC&R viewed it. For Catholics, mankind was born in original sin. Shame is often the subjective experience accompanying the belief in this original sin; hardly do Christians see the condition as beneficial or respectable. But although it can never be completely escaped, original sin can at least be accepted and appreciated to the extent that Christians believe it to be a necessary prerequisite to their inclusion in a broader narrative of salvation. The negative consequences of origin sin can, through salvation, be redeemed: transformed into virtues as long as followers remain faithful to weekly tune their spirit to the church.

In the same way, the DC&R accepted primitivism as a condition that would mark the Brazilian people for years to come. Enthusiastic manifestos in the 1920s notwithstanding, shame and anxiety still surrounded the attitudes of educators and political elites as they contemplated their societies. In a broad salvation narrative based on a synthesis of social-science models, music served as the primary tool in the project of redeeming the nation. The pitfalls of primitivism could be avoided if music tuned the national mind, teaching the Brazilian people to respect hierarchy, practice social harmony, and increase productivity. But this project of redeeming Brazil would require all the elements the Congress had set out to do: enlist the national participation of music

educators across the country, encourage regular choral sessions, and demonstrate concert programs reinforcing a narrative of racial and class hierarchies as necessary components of social harmony.

Conclusion

Political leadership and funding priorities in the city of São Paulo changed in 1938. This brought a significant downscaling of DC&R projects. A summary of the decline of the department provides closure to the story of São Paulo's attempt to harmonize their city. It also sets the stage for some final reflections on modernity and music.

On November 10, 1937, Getúlio Vargas suspended the Brazilian constitution and inaugurated the Estado Novo, or "New State." These actions halted preparations for the upcoming presidential elections. Vargas remained head of state, now as de facto dictator. He then reinstated the system of federally-appointed interventors in place of state governors. This allowed him to appoint politicians or military leaders supportive of his takeover to state leadership posts. Typical of the Brazilian political system at the time, each new interventor appointed new mayors across the state, who in turn assembled a new cabinet of department heads.

Armando de Salles Oliveira, erstwhile interventor of São Paulo in 1933 and then governor supporting the creation of the Department of Culture, was no longer on good terms with Vargas in 1937. Oliveira had left his position as governor at the end of 1936 to run against Vargas in the 1937 presidential elections. After a week interim, José Joaquim Cardoso de Melo Neto had stepped in to replace Oliveira.

Throughout 1937, Cardoso had supported Oliveira's governmental projects, including prefeito Fabio Prado's extensive financial support of the DC&R. Vargas, after declaring the Estado Novo, had permitted Cardoso to remain as head of the coffee state in the position of interim interventor. But in April 1938, Vargas replaced Cardoso with

Ademar de Barros, a doctor and politician that had courted Vargas' favor. Barros would lead the state of São Paulo from April 27, 1938 to June 1941. Once in his new role, Ademar de Barros named Francisco Prestes Maia prefeito of the city of São Paulo on May 9, 1938.

Prestes Maia was an ambitious engineer who, a decade before, had created a masterplan for urban reform across the city of São Paulo. He had published his plan as a massive tome while pursuing a degree in engineering and architecture at São Paulo's Polytechnic Institute. *O Plano das Grandes Avenidas*, or Wide Avenues Plan, argued that better mobility in São Paulo was necessary for economic growth and social order. He proposed to improve traffic by creating a system of radial highways. Once installed as mayor, Prestes Maia made the Wide Avenues Plan the core objective of his administration and stripped the city's cultural budget to do so.¹

While the new mayor needed all the money he could find, Prestes Maia's decision to cut cultural funding likely included a desire to establish a clear contrast with the previous administration. Local newspaper coverage from 1935-8 made it clear that the DC&R served as the gem of the Prado administration. By cutting its budget, Prestes Maia conveyed to the public that he preferred to brand the city with the mark of his own political platform rather than continue the institutional projects of a previous administration. This explains one of his first actions as mayor: the day Prestes Maia came into office, he asked Mário de Andrade to step down from his post as DC&R director.

¹ Francisco Prestes Maia, *Estudo de um Plano de Avenidas para a cidade de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Companhia Melhoramentos de São Paulo, 1930). Helpful analysis and context is provided in Benedito Lima de Toledo, *Prestes Maia e as origens do São Paulo moderno* (São Paulo: Marcelo Mário Associados, 1996).

The musical projects of the DC&R lost momentum after the change, and the ethnographic projects ground to a halt. Attendance to the “musical experience” lectures given by Oneyda Alvarenga and hosted by the local Music Library plummeted after the mayor discouraged public promotion of the events;² the folkloric mission—in the midst of their recording trip—was terminated and the ethnographers were ordered to return to São Paulo;³ the Society of Ethnography and Folklore died out before the end of 1938;⁴ Prestes Maia canceled a large cultural celebration planned for fiftieth anniversary of the abolition of slavery;⁵ and the department sponsored far fewer local concerts.⁶

Other branches of the DC&R maintained their research and outreach projects in spite of the budget cuts. The Division of Education/Recreation opened a fourth public playground.⁷ The Division of Social and Historic Documentation continued to publish their scholarly journal, the *Revista do Arquivo Municipal*. In June 1938, the same division published the results of an elaborate social study encouraging government subsidies for local entertainment to help residents spend their free time and money in psychologically healthy ways.⁸

² Oneyda Alvarenga to Mário de Andrade, Personal Correspondence, Nov. 29 1938. Andrade, *Caras*, 154.

³ Telegram, MA-C-CPL6283, Acervo Mário de Andrade, Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros, Universidade de São Paulo.

⁴ Oneyda Alvarenga to Mário de Andrade, Personal Correspondence, August 13, 1938. Andrade, *Cartas*, 143.

⁵ Correspondence, Francisco Pati to Prestes Maia. August 11, 1938, followed by “Relação das Indumentárias Confeccionadas Para Efeito Da Comemoração do Cincoentenário da Abolição.” Caixa 27, Subfundo: Departamento de Cultura, Arquivo Municipal.

⁶ “Prestação de Contas” from March through July 1938, Caixas 26-7, Subfundo: Departamento de Cultura, Arquivo Municipal, shows the cut in concerts by the Coral Paulistano, Força Pública band, and the Department trio.

⁷ Note included in “Prestação de Contas,” Caixa 27, Subfundo: Departamento de Cultura, Arquivo Municipal.

⁸ “Estudos sobre Divertimentos Públicos,” written by Bruno Rudolfer, sent to Francisco Pati on June 13, 1938; forwarded to the mayor on July 16, 1938. Caixa 27, Subfundo: Departamento de Cultura, Arquivo Municipal.

Rapid employment shifts, produced by changes in regime or political party, were not unusual in this period. But Mário de Andrade and Paulo Duarte took the loss of their jobs personally. Duarte left in exile shortly after the inauguration of the Estado Novo. In his memoirs, Duarte cursed the Estado Novo for the change. He suggested Vargas himself wanted to destroy the cultural institution as a way to curb São Paulo's cultural innovation.⁹

Andrade moved to Rio de Janeiro and taught courses at the Federal University. Personal correspondence suggests his personal life took a turn for the worse as he fell into depression and alcoholism after losing his political position.¹⁰ Andrade returned to São Paulo in 1941, but his health remained rocky at best. Letters to close friends included frequent references to despair and death. He died from a heart attack in 1945.

Andrade had invested so much of himself into the DC&R projects that he had trouble separating his own life from the life of the department. When Andrade lost his position, he felt that he had lost himself and his own mission. In the month after losing his position, Andrade wrote to Duarte: "I completely sacrificed three years of my life." He was most upset that all of his effort had not been enough to "impose and normalize the Department of Culture as part of São Paulo's social life."¹¹

Andrade's frustration over the silencing of his musical institution becomes more intriguing in the comparison of Prestes Maia and Andrade's leadership styles. Both men

⁹ Some scholars in São Paulo have unfortunately read this claim uncritically instead of examining the political context and local motivations responsible for the 1938 changes. See, for example, Moacir Werneck de Castro, *Mário de Andrade: exílio no Rio* (Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 1989).

¹⁰ Andrade and Alvarenga. *Cartas*, 186, 191.

¹¹ "Sacrifiquei por completo três anos de minha vida começada tarde, dirigindo o D.C. Digo por completo porque não consegui fazer a única coisa que, em minha consciência justificaria o sacrifício: não consegui impor e normalizar o D.C. na vida paulistana." April, 3, 1938. Duarte, *Mário por ele*, 158-9.

had aspired to remake the city in their own image. Andrade ran a department that institutionalized artistic production in the form he had championed in the 1920s. Composers crafted concerts in accordance with Andrade's librettos and musical rules, while ethnographers in 1938 recreated a journey that Andrade had himself taken ten years prior. Prestes Maia, too, used his government position to realize a project he had made in the 1920s. Construction workers crafted tunnels and highways in accordance with his urban theories and blueprints. Both leaders believed their projects ought take precedence over considerations to institutional continuity; both asserted their reforms would be the best for the city. Finally, although the two projects held modernity as their end, they bore great resemblance to colonial civilizing strategies.

Urban historians Richard Kagan and Fernando Marías have reminded scholars that cities across Latin America were historically understood as consisting of both the *urbs*, the built environment, and the *civitas*, the community living within the city's walls. During Brazil's colonial period, leaders pursued a civilizing project that addressed *urbs* and *civitas* alike. Civilizing the *urbs* meant using architecture to figuratively represent and physically safeguard the morality and well-being of the population. A central strategy included making paths wide and straight to prevent congestion and immoral encounters. The construction of ornate churches and government buildings attested to the strength of the city.¹² Colonial leaders also supported projects designed to shape the *civitas*: they passed legislation, founded charitable institutions, wrote histories of great individuals from the community, and conducted civic and spiritual processions.¹³ Most importantly,

¹² Kagan and Marías, *Urban*, 21.

¹³ Richard Kagan and Fernando Marías, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 20.

secular and religious leaders considered music as central to the repertoire of practices used to shape the civitas.¹⁴

The DC&R recast the traditional civitas project to align with such twentieth-century pursuits as efficiency, productivity, scientific scholarship, and psychological development. The attempt to create a Radio School broadcasting classical music in factories reveals department leaders that viewed music as a technology for increasing worker efficiency. The 1938 ethnographic mission served as a scientific attempt to document a national identity considered an natural essence rather than a social construction. This national identity was itself defined according to anthropological and psychological frameworks. The department also championed choral singing as a method by which adults could feel harmony and children of immigrants could align their minds with the nation's racial psychology. Music, for the DC&R, served as the key resource for a socializing project aimed at the São Paulo civitas, and could do so in a way relevant to contemporary needs.

Prestes Maia's project instead aimed to realize modernity by transforming the urbs. The title and central goals of the Wide Avenues Plan seemed to resurrect the colonial project of creating a moral geography by constructing wide and straight roads. Prestes Maia, however, was looking less at distant Portuguese precursors, and more at American and European urbanists. Most significantly, Prestes Maia emulated the work of American urbanist Daniel Burnham, planner for the 1893 World's Exposition in Chicago and designer of master plans for multiple cities in the US.¹⁵ Burnham, in turn, had

¹⁴ This is clear in the variety of essays in Geoffrey Baker and Tess Knighton, eds., *Music and Urban Society in Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹⁵ Prestes Maia, *Estudo*, ix. Prestes Maia even pays homage to Burnham in the introduction to the Wide Avenues Plan, quoting Burnham's famous dictum to "make no little plans."

borrowed heavily from the ideas of Georges-Eugène Haussman, the architect of the mid-nineteenth century Paris reforms. Haussman, and then Burnham, had championed the concept of improving a city through the construction of wide avenues. It was here that Prestes Maia found a name for his São Paulo reform project.

The Wide Avenues Plan sought to bring modernity to the city of São Paulo by creating an urban environment characterized by fluid mobility, the conquest of nature, and capital development. The core of the plan revolved around the construction of a triparte system of avenues: wide radial spokes, a circular perimeter road, and a Y-shaped artery into the heart of the city.¹⁶ The network of avenues would improve mobility, cut transit time, and support local development. Prestes Maia additionally called for the reshaping of the Tieté, the river running across the city's Northern border. The river's serpentine flow resulted in annual flooding that Prestes Maia argued was "inconceivable in any civilized capital." The ambitious engineer called for the city to redirect the river to eliminate the floods, preparing the banks for "modern and spacious neighborhoods" and industrial centers.¹⁷

Both the Prado and Prestes Maia administrations adopted strategies with long histories and adapted them to meet contemporary needs. They then shaped the products in accordance with their view of modernity. For the Prado administration, it was the transformation of the civitas that served as the means to modernity. Specifically, modernity required psychological development. Accepting the primitive mentality framework, São Paulo administrators argued their city needed to rely on music to engage the bodies and minds of a passive and mentally-underdeveloped community. Andrade

¹⁶ Prestes Maia, *Estudo*, 34-46, 51-2, 82-9, 322-4.

¹⁷ Prestes Maia, *Estudo*, x, 322-324.

stood as the foremost missionary of this interpretation of modernity, and he made many converts.

Nestled among Andrade's personal papers is the transcription of one of the many graduation speeches he gave at São Paulo's Music Conservatory. In the speech, he told a story of a giant princess tree with a hunched trunk that still managed to reach up to the stars. A magician cut down the tree and stripped it of its branches. But a line of enormous vines hung from the top of the tree and latched to the bottom of its trunk, making the tree resemble an enormous harp. All the best musicians in the region came to play the princess tree, but no one could produce a single sound. Then a musician came from another land and sat in silence in front of the enormous instrument. He then approached the tree, and worked with it to play not the sounds he wanted to hear, but those the instrument was willing and able to produce. Out came the most beautiful sound, "softening all of the hearts" of the listeners. Everyone joined together, "hand united, pairs hugged calmly, and the nations helped one another in sovereign humanity, at the sound that came from the harp."

Having finished his parable, Andrade reminded his students that the nation of Brazil had the shape of an enormous harp. He encouraged the young students not to seek to play their own songs, but rather to listen to the songs needed by the Brazilian nation and play accordingly. The story was one of many Andrade created to convince students to play Brazilian nationalist music. This one in particular portrayed Brazil as a primitive place waiting for redemption. The enormous princess tree, replete with wild vines, represented a tropical Brazil. Even though no one had tamed or tuned the primitive nation, the next generation of music educators could make the most of its inherent

musicality. Andrade cheered on the students: “You have a still-young race that needs to be made valuable. Make it valuable through music!” While Brazil’s primitive mentality was not something that gave Andrade pride, he urged the students that if they engaged the nation’s inherent musicality, they could give something back to the world. He closed his speech with these words: “You have to strum your American harp, so that the continent and race donate their original song and that is the only way in which we can enrich humanity in some way.”¹⁸

When I read this story in the archive, I got caught up Andrade’s rich imagery and layered symbolism. I felt within me the excitement of changing the world through music. Music students hearing this speech at their graduation ceremony may have felt that excitement as well. But if so, it is representative of the larger problem in the DC&R project. The institution preached an intriguing message of solving local and national problems through music. But in practice this amounted to a socialization project that prepared children of immigrants to be docile and productive workers. The institution ignored Afro-Brazilian and Amerindian communities altogether but warned middle and upper-class concert attendees of the danger of unruly masses.

The modernist message continued to be intriguing long after the decline of the DC&R, and not just to the country’s music educators. Movie directors, artists, and musicians have engaged modernist symbolism and texts extensively. This was no more apparent than in Tropicalia music movement and in the re-stagings of Oswald de Andrade’s primitivist plays by São Paulo’s Teatro Oficina in the late 1960s. Musicians and actors hailed the modernist call to turn to the arts instead of politics in order to solve

¹⁸ “Assim vós tendes que tanger vossa arpa americana, para que o continente e a raça, dêem aquele canto original que lhe é próprio, e é o unico com que nós americanos poderemos enriquecer de alguma coisa a humanidade.” “Música Fator Social,” MA-MMA-115, Manuscritos, Fondo Mário de Andrade, IEB.

social problems. But is it possible that the economic and political elite of Brazil's military dictatorship were all the more able to dismiss these groups and their requests because of the intellectual backdrop of the modernist project? And how about the racial struggles for equality in 1970s and 1980s Brazil? Historians agree that the Brazilian struggle for racial equality has been overwhelmingly waged in the arts. But did the primitive paradigm—with its claim that Afro-Brazilians had innate musical prowess but needed discipline and hierarchy to prevent violent outbreaks—make it easier to accept the musical attacks of marginalized communities as long as they remain waged in the cultural sphere and not in legal or political arenas?

It is my hope that *The Symphony of State* prepares us to observe the potential dangers and limitations of musical projects today. Music education projects, nationalist symphonies, and even pop albums do not “tune” the body politic in the mystical way described in Andrade's writings. But music does normalize discourses across wide populations. Since a discourse can justify social inequality and reinforce racial prejudice just as easily as it can dismantle them, we must recognize music as more than a social panacea. Nor are discourses all-powerful when spread through music. While tunes often move our hearts, they lack the durability provided by legislation and the material benefits that come from political action. So musicians interested in reducing social inequalities might even consider an ethics of musicality that makes time for involvement in projects that go beyond the arts.

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HBMA	Hemeroteca, Biblioteca Mário de Andrade, São Paulo
IEB	Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros, USP, São Paulo
CCSP	Mediateca Oneyda Alvarenga, Centro Cultural de São Paulo

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Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Summer Fellow, São Paulo, Brazil		2012
Presidential Fellowship, Florida International University		2010-2013
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PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

“Demolishing Legitimacy: Bogotá’s Urban Reforms for the 1948 Pan-American Conference.” Forthcoming. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Cambridge University Press.

- 2016 UGS Provost Award (best article), Florida International University

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- “Music and Citizenship in São Paulo, Brazil,” Tulane University Summer Abroad Course, Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, July 7, 2015.
- “Professional Advantages of Foreign Language Acquisition,” University Convocation Program, Belmont University, March 28, 2014.
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