

Musical Nationalism for the 21st Century: From Andrade's Archive to A Barca's Repertoire

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Abstract: This paper compares the first album of the São Paulo based group A Barca to Mário de Andrade's musical nationalism in the early 20th century, which inspired the contemporary group. Rather than precisely replicating the original sources, A Barca creates a hybrid cultural form that blurs the constructed distinctions between popular and erudite, traditional and modern. By analyzing A Barca's project, this paper addresses ongoing regional dynamics within Brazilian culture and the problematic constructs of "authenticity" and "popular".

Keywords: Mário de Andrade, A Barca, popular Brazilian music, cultural nationalism.

O Brasileiro é um povo esplendidamente musical. Nosso populário sonoro honra a nacionalidade. A transformação dele em música artística não posso dizer que vai mal não, vai bem.

Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira*

Over eighty years after Mário de Andrade claimed that Brazilians are a splendidly musical people, the connection between music and national identity remains strong. Yet only certain musical practices contribute to this cultural imagination of Brazil. The search for "authentically Brazilian" music has often celebrated the popular traditions and rhythms of rural northern regions while slighting urban musical innovations; Andrade's musicological writings exemplify this tendency by extensively documenting the variety of rural musical traditions, while only briefly mentioning urban genres before dismissing

them.¹ Subsequent developments within Brazilian popular music have remedied this omission by stressing the roles of samba, *bossa nova* and *MPB*, all distinctly urban forms, in the formation of national cultural identity.² In spite of this scholarly validation of urban music, however, the quest for the “authentic” often returns to rural enclaves of the North and Northeast where popular music and traditions are imagined to be frozen in time as artifacts unaltered by technology and global transformations.

Interest in the musical practices of these northern regions and rural zones has been renewed since the mid-1990s, a period marked by redemocratization within Brazil and widespread discussions of globalization. This recent “return to the roots” emerges as an attempt to showcase Brazil’s musical diversity by incorporating various rhythms and traditions into contemporary music. Artists seek to define the nation at home and abroad by proposing visions of musical nationalism reminiscent of Mário de Andrade’s work. Musicians blend traditional forms of *maracatu* with rap, rock, or reggae to create songs more accessible in an international marketplace, a style epitomized by the *mangue* movement of Recife.³ These manifestations recall the Movimento Armorial, another Recife-based movement from the 1970s that incorporated “traditional” forms into music, theater, and other artistic practices.⁴ However, Northeasterners are not the only ones to search for “authenticity” in the popular practices of their region. Dating back to Andrade’s travels as an “apprentice tourist” in the 1920s and 1930s, artists and intellectuals from southeastern Brazilian cities have often turned towards the North and Northeast as sources of “true Brazilianness,” especially when interested in unifying the nation and articulating its distinctiveness. Curatorial endeavors such as Andrade’s 1938 *Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas*, Marcus Pereira’s “*Música Popular do Brasil*” series in the mid 1970s, and Hermano Vianna’s *Música do Brasil* in the late 1990s tend to both reflect and perpetuate fissures between regions, classes and races as Southeasterners travel across Brazil documenting musical practices and proposing visions of cultural nationalism.⁵ During the 1960s, musicians associated with the Centro Popular de Cultura (CPC) and Tropicália delved once more into the musical practices of the Northeast, fueled by an interest in research and the desire to create politically and socially engaged art.⁶ Perhaps

inspired by the legacy of Andrade, these artists and intellectuals have continued to explore questions of nationalism and cultural identity.

Discussions of “authenticity” and a desire to preserve the diversity of Brazilian popular music permeate the discourse of these projects. By proposing notions of cultural nationalism, they reveal how these ideas remain embedded in a system of power dynamics based on regional and socio-economic divisions. Within this recent trend, the São Paulo based group A Barca stands out for their close approximation to Andrade in terms of spirit and material sources, a connection that I will further explore in this paper. In 1998, this group began to study the popular forms gathered by Andrade, soon developing songs drawn from this material. His theoretical writings and field research on music inspired A Barca’s first album, which shares its title, *Turista Aprendiz*, with Andrade’s travel journal from the late 1920s. The album contains adaptations of songs belonging to Andrade’s archive and other pieces collected during travels in the North, Northeast and the interior of the state of São Paulo.⁷ Rather than merely reproduce these original sources, A Barca interprets and adapts material to create its own music. The group’s work combines a research interest inherited from Andrade and earlier projects of musical mapping with an artistic desire parallel to the push by Movimento Armorial and *mangue* musicians to incorporate traditional rhythms into their songs. This blend of curatorial practices with musical creation also recalls the cultural projects of the CPC. Whereas the leftist artists of the CPC longed to create a popular revolutionary art, A Barca turns to popular sources for less expressly political reasons, drawing inspiration directly from Andrade’s cultural nationalism and musicological studies as they document, adapt, and interpret popular forms.⁸

A close analysis of their first album reveals that A Barca makes only slight changes to the lyrics. Through professionalized performances, they create a hybrid cultural form that blurs constructed distinctions between popular and erudite, traditional and modern. The group emerges as a cultural broker for the 21st century, moving between distinct cultural discourses, geographic spaces, and performance circuits. As A Barca transforms archival materials into a performance repertoire, they bring earlier debates about cultural nationalism and the quest for the authentic into the present. I argue that their project

allows for a reconsideration of fissures in national identity, their cultural manifestations, and Andrade's legacy within these discussions. Studying A Barca's work facilitates a reflection on the role of artists, intellectuals, and institutions as cultural resources mediating between the local, the national, and the global.

Artists like A Barca attempt to bring prestige to their work and to the Brazilian nation by invoking culture as a resource, which recalls earlier instances of cultural nationalism. In the context of redemocratization and globalization at the turn of the 21st century, A Barca draws on the vision of musical nationalism that Andrade developed as the idea of a modern Brazil was still being constructed and consolidated. Facing distinct moments of cultural crises, Andrade and A Barca respond with discourses of cultural affirmation rooted in the search for the autochthonous. Andrade documents popular musical practices and urges Brazilian musicians to incorporate these rhythms into their classical compositions. Although inspired by Andrade's definition of cultural nationalism, A Barca does not narrowly follow his heed for academic music as articulated in the *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira*. Instead, the group creates a stylized popular music that resurrects the "authentic" Brazilian culture captured in Andrade's archival documentation of Northeastern popular music. This move not only indicates a preoccupation with the autochthonous, but also reveals the continued importance of Andrade in discussions of Brazilian culture and musical nationalism.

Modernism, Music and "Brazilianness": Andrade's Legacy

Andrade transformed the fields of literature, music and its scholarship, and cultural patrimony over the course of his multi-faceted career. In 1922, he helped launch Brazilian modernism with his poetic portrait of São Paulo, *Pauliceia desvairada*, during the Semana de Arte Moderna. His most celebrated fictional work, *Macunaíma—o héroi sem nenhum caráter*, and his classic contribution to musicological thought, *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira*, both appeared in 1928. These works propose alternative visions of Brazilianness that acknowledge the diversity of traditions, cultures, and people that shape national identity. Andrade's travels through Brazil and encounters with its music and people informed this more inclusive conception of cultural nationalism.

As articulated in his *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira*, Andrade viewed these popular musical practices as “the most complete, most fully national, strongest creation of our race up to now” (20). Popular rural forms represented a source of “Brazilianness,” a national cultural resource that should be studied and valued; and, as such he urged classical Brazilian composers to incorporate popular forms in order to produce uniquely national art music (Andrade, *Ensaio...* 45, 56).⁹ A “traditionalist” impulse to discover, document, preserve, and share musical forms guided Andrade’s project of musical nationalism.¹⁰ Given his role as a modernist interested in innovation, the emphasis on tradition in his musicological studies may seem paradoxical.¹¹ Yet Andrade acknowledges, and even celebrates, the presence of tradition in his work. In 1928, he writes in his journal, “They say that I am a modernist... patience! The truth is that I never denied Brazilian traditions, I study them and I seek to continue with them by my side ... What we need is to distinguish tradition and tradition. There are mobile traditions and immobile traditions” (Andrade, *O turista aprendiz* 254).¹² Due to their continuous transformations, Andrade views the documentation of popular music and other mobile traditions as essential.

Both the broader modernist concept of cultural nationalism and Andrade’s vision of musical nationalism raise problematic contradictions. As Fernando Giobellina Brumana notes, the modernists’ cultural nationalism could only be the fantasy of a small and important group of artistic elite wishing to construct a national culture. This desire later became institutionalized with the creation of the Department of Culture in São Paulo led by Andrade, government-funded “folkloric” investigations, and other cultural policies of the Estado Novo. One must recall this historical context when analyzing Andrade’s musical nationalism and its significance to contemporary scholars and musicians. Even with this framework in mind, however, Andrade’s musical nationalism constructs a problematic vision of the popular by solely focusing on rural forms. According to José Miguel Wisnik, “The problem is that modernist musical nationalism takes the authenticity of these manifestations as the base of its representation *to the detriment of the movements of popular urban life because it cannot accommodate the incorporation of this latter form*, which would disorganize the homogeneous and paternalist centralized vision of national culture”

(Wisnik, “Getúlio da Paixão Cearense...” 133). Andrade constructed a unified and unifying notion of “national culture” based upon the perceived “authenticity” of rural forms. This musical nationalism, as well as subsequent discussions about national culture and identity, revolve around problematic notions of the “authentic” and the “popular.”

“Popular” Cultures and the Search for the “Authentic”

Before further comparing the musical project of A Barca to Andrade’s musicological studies, it is helpful to clarify understandings of the popular and the authentic. According to George Yúdice, the notion of the popular in Brazil and other Latin American countries was historically connected to the construction of a national-popular in a Gramscian sense. Cultures practiced by “the people” often became appropriated by the state and transformed into an invented modern tradition of the “authentic, national popular culture” used for political means (Yúdice, “Translator’s Introduction” xviii-xxx). Néstor García Canclini similarly notes three distinct uses of the popular in a Latin American context: “The folklorists almost always talk of *the traditional popular*, the mass media of *popularity*, and the politicians of *the people*” (197). Even as the mass media notion of “popularity” spread throughout Latin America, conceptions of the “popular” as the “traditional” cultural forms of “the people,” often linked to political populism, persisted in the region. García Canclini explores the incompatibility of these notions, which leads to a questioning and deconstruction of the “popular” and a subsequent need for its reconstruction. He reminds us that the “popular” has always been a constructed notion; it can only be understood in the context of a specific place and time. Juan Flores describes this particularity as “popular culture in time,” which he explains is “momentary, that with all its embeddedness in tradition and the historical past, it is contemporary, it is always *now*” (23).

Different notions of the “popular” become particularly noticeable in the realm of music. Ethnomusicologist Ana María Ochoa notes that the English term “popular music” refers to urban musical forms consumed by the masses and associated with the culture industry, whereas the Spanish or Portuguese term “música(s) popular(es)” is more ambiguous and can refer to both traditional popular music and urban popular music. According to Ochoa, the

notion of the “popular” refers to a social environment of the “people,” as distinct from the erudite or the classical. It may imply the idea of passivity based on the acceptance and consumption of “popular” commodities by a large number of people, but this term has never delineated a clear separation between “folklore” or traditional forms and urban mass musical production in Latin America.¹³ Andrade’s understanding of the “popular” in music corresponds to this first notion of the popular, commonly described as “folklore” during the era of his research. In recent years, the vague territory between the two co-existing notions of the “popular” in musical genres and other cultural forms has emerged as a subject of much debate in Latin America.¹⁴ Within this contemporary context, A Barca conceives of popular music in a similar manner to Andrade as the music of “the people.” Their initial access to these popular forms does not come from recent fieldwork, but rather is mediated through Andrade’s earlier research. They bring this archival documentation to life through interpretations and performances that acknowledge the legacy of Andrade while also recognizing the particularity of “popular culture in time.”

The “popular” often emerges as the source of “authenticity” at the essence of national identity. Brazilian cultural sociologist Renato Ortiz examines this role of popular cultures in the construction of a modern Brazilian tradition. Ortiz’s understanding of authenticity stresses the concept’s imagined nature.¹⁵ As a construction within a specific spatial and temporal context, authenticity emerges as an invented notion of a given region, people or cultural practice, often developed for political means. Ortiz observes that, “an authentic identity does not exist, but rather a plurality of identities, constructed by different social groups in different historic moments” (8). The fact that authenticity emerges as a discursive construction within a particular context does not diminish its importance in discussions of national identity, cultural practices, and musical forms. Searches for the “authentic” continue, perhaps because authenticity remains what ethnomusicologist John O’Flynn describes as “a discursive trope of great persuasive power ... [that] can be employed to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct identities” (33-34). Discourses of authenticity have often been linked to the national-popular in Latin America and employed by figures of power to affirm cultural distinctiveness.

The evocation of the “authentic” can result in the construction, deconstruction or reconstruction of identities at an individual, group or national level. Andrade’s discourse of the authentic facilitated the construction of “Brazilian-ness” within the modernist project of cultural nationalism, which was embedded in hierarchical structures of power. In recent years, musicians such as A Barca have similarly invoked notions of the authentic when attempting to re-imagine Brazilian national culture and identity. A Barca’s musical project emerges as a possibility for the reconstruction of cultural nationalism within a global realm characterized by increasingly multi-determined structures of cultural and political power. Their artistic proposal is particularly unique given its close approximation to Andrade’s musicological writings, revealing the continued importance of the modernist’s legacy and, perhaps more importantly, exposing current fissures within discourses and cultural manifestations of national identity.

“Os Turistas Aprendizes”: A Barca Sings Andrade

A Barca’s search for the authentic begins with an archival journey through Andrade’s writings and documentation of the “unadulterated” musical forms of the North and Northeast. The songs recorded by Andrade have transformed with the introduction of new technologies and the increased circulation of people and ideas.¹⁶ To discover the “authentic” as constructed by Andrade and institutionalized within the Brazilian imaginary, A Barca “returns” to a temporal and geographic place preserved in the archive by recordings, sheet music, and other documents gathered nearly seventy years ago. Given the slim chances of group members’ previous exposure to these practices, the archival journey allows these recent university graduates and natives of southeastern Brazil to discover these relatively unfamiliar popular musical forms.¹⁷ Singer and bassist Renata Amaral describes Andrade’s musicological work as a jumping-off point: “The work of A Barca started with a study of the works of Mário de Andrade, particularly the musical material gathered by him in his diverse trips, as well as the recordings made in 1938 by the Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas, a project he created as head of the Department of Culture of São Paulo” (“Primeira Audição” 129). Andrade’s studies inspire the group to embark on their own musical exploration, a journey whose initial phase is showcased on their first

album and becomes more fully elaborated in subsequent travels to nine states as part of the 2005 *Projeto Turista Aprendiz*.

According to the group, a desire to learn about Brazilian popular music and share this knowledge motivates their project. Andrade's lecture "O artista e o artesão," where he stresses the social function of art as embodied in its technical practice, provides an initial inspiration; drawing from Andrade's essay, the group explains that, "Always in transformation, popular art is genuinely social, because it is functional, be it in the playful or the religious sense. It always needs interest. In its origin is the search for communication between people. Based on that desire for communication, we began the task that is anything but simple of researching, studying and presenting this material" ("Apontamentos de viagem," *Turista aprendiz*). A Barca shares Andrade's vision of the artist's social responsibility as that of promoting and preserving creative works, sharing knowledge, and participating in current debates. Like Andrade and other socially or politically engaged artists, the group recognizes the importance of commitment to the community. A Barca hopes to fulfill their role by researching relatively unknown forms of popular music and sharing them with a broader public.

To a certain extent, A Barca invokes Yúdice's concept of the expediency of culture as a resource which "entails its management ... [as it] circulates globally, with ever increasing velocity" (*The Expediency of Culture* 3-4). Yúdice moves beyond a merely political understanding of the concept in order to propose a "performative understanding of the expediency of culture [that], in contrast, focuses on the strategies implied in any invocation of culture, any invention of tradition, in relation to some purpose or goal. That there is an end is what makes it possible to speak of culture as a resource" (38). For A Barca, this end purpose is rooted in a pedagogical desire and an interest in preserving and promoting diverse styles of Brazilian music; the group views the music documented by Andrade as a cultural resource that must be "managed" and circulated within distinct markets. Given their relatively minimal insertion into the global market, this invocation of culture as a resource remains only partial in its reach. Instead, as pianist and composer Lincoln Antônio mentions, the idea behind A Barca's musical project is "similar to the principles of Mário, to return to Brazil and thus give continuity to our research" ("Grupo A Barca traz a SP os shows"). A Barca

intends to share their knowledge of Brazil's musical diversity with a variety of audiences and spread enthusiasm for lesser known rhythms and styles.

The group's performances bring archival materials to life by re-introducing often forgotten musical practices into their repertoire. According to Diana Taylor, this shift to the repertoire "requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by 'being there,' being a part of the transmission" (19). Once removed from the page or the tape, the musical forms documented by Andrade are no longer bound by the relative stability of the archive, and they continue to evolve as musical practices. The group reactivates these musical forms as embodied acts that "reconstitute themselves, transmitting communal memories, histories, and values from one group/generation to the next" (Taylor 21). Culture becomes a living resource for A Barca as they move between different spatial, temporal, and social realms to transmit knowledge from Andrade's archive through acts of performance.

For A Barca, culture prevents a "flattening" of local identity within a world increasingly governed by neoliberal economics and transnational politics. According to their album's introductory notes, "*Turista Aprendiz*, the show, is above all a rehearsal, a game, a toy. It does not have formalistic intentions. It was the product of a desire to show, primarily to São Paulo audiences, something from popular Brazilian culture, all that differentiates us and makes us unique in front of the 'concert of nations'" ("Apontamentos de viagem," *Turista aprendiz*). Their project intends not only to distinguish Brazil in this era of globalization, but also to educate residents of southern and central Brazil about their country's cultural distinctiveness, namely its "popular culture." When describing their project, A Barca employs the term "popular Brazilian culture" in the sense used by Andrade in his musicological writings. However, in order to better understand A Barca's project, we must broaden our conception of their notion of popular culture to accommodate for various changes in the "popular" since Andrade's time.

Rather than duplicate the materials gathered by Andrade, A Barca removes songs from the archive and transforms them to create a hybrid cultural form. Whereas Latin America has often been theorized through series of oppositions, the region's history and contemporary cultural landscape call for

a more nuanced approach. The borders between such dyads are porous: traditions are not erased with the introduction of the modern; popular and lettered culture often co-exist; and geographic distinctions become almost meaningless as people and ideas circulate between the rural and the urban, the local and the global. By studying processes of hybridization, García Canclini proposes alternatives for understanding these relationships in Latin America; he reframes the debate, making it not about “losing” identity, but rather about taking control of its meanings and reshaping them in a global context.

A Barca’s musical project poses a potential solution to this dilemma. By interpreting, performing, and circulating songs documented by Andrade and gathered in the field, A Barca distances the works from their original sources and introduces them into other markets. The group negotiates a way to partially insert “traditional” forms and local music into the modern cultural landscape. Yet the group is not wholly integrated into the global consumer market. Within Brazil, A Barca has developed a certain visibility via performances and educational workshops throughout the country and especially in São Paulo. However, their project remains relatively unknown outside of Brazil, as their CDs and DVD circulate primarily in alternative spaces. The independent label Gravadura CPC-UMES recorded A Barca’s first two albums. This label provides an alternative outlet for MPB, particularly those forms that, because of their differentiation, do not find a place within the conventional media.¹⁸ The label promotes A Barca’s albums as “quality popular Brazilian music,” a loaded term intended to valorize groups that have not fully integrated into the mainstream recording industry. This reference to their musicians as “quality” artists could also be read as an implicit critique of commercially successful musicians catering to the international music industry. This alternative label sells *Turista Aprendiz* and *Baião de Princesas* through their online store. The group’s *Trilha, Toada e Trupé* box collection was only available through the group’s website or at one of their shows before it sold out. A Barca’s limited insertion in the global market reflects the self-described motivation for their project in its research aspects and educational goals.¹⁹

A Barca’s project also questions the false dichotomies of popular or erudite and traditional or modern. The group treats these musical practices as

living cultural organisms that can be adapted by applying modern erudite techniques to traditional popular sources in order to reach new publics. A Barca negotiates at least a partial insertion of the “traditional” and the “local” into the modern global marketplace, and the hybrid nature of their project manifests itself in the placement of tracks on *Turista Aprendiz* as well. Songs adapted from Andrade’s documentation and from the Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas’ recordings appear alongside versions of “traditional” sambas and songs gathered during A Barca’s field research. Of the album’s 20 songs, six tracks are based on the lyrics and music collected by Andrade and annotated in his musical writings. Materials recorded on the Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas provide the sources for four of the album’s songs. In three tracks, A Barca combines interpretations of materials previously documented by Andrade or the Missão with extended musical interludes and poetry recitations. The album also includes interpretations of two “traditional” sambas. In the four remaining tracks, A Barca interprets songs learned during their field research in Pará, Maranhão, and the interior of São Paulo. The album intersperses these diverse tracks to reveal hybridization even in the project’s format.

The hybrid nature becomes more evident through a close analysis of the songs. On the first track, A Barca interprets “Marujó du Má,” sung by José Paulino Gregório and Amaro Marcia Cheves in Natal and documented by Andrade in 1928. On the Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas’ recording from 1938, Manoel Soares Silva uses the cadences of his speech and the rhythm of Brazilian Portuguese to create the song’s musicality. A Barca’s interpretation blends a professionalized vocal harmonization between a male lead and two female back-up singers with percussive elements often linked to the “popular.” Chants, clapping, and whistles increase in pace and intensity as the song approaches its conclusion, overpowering distinctions between the three vocalists as voices transform into a percussive element. As other sounds diminish, the lead male voice surges and chants quickly in a speech-driven musical act akin to the pared-down songs recorded by Andrade. Whereas the original recording revolved around the grain of the singer’s voice, A Barca interprets this song through the filter of their university education in music to create a more layered and polished arrangement.²⁰

These processes of hybridization in A Barca's work also occur between the traditional and the modern, as illustrated in "Ô Baiana." Andrade documented the lyrics of this *coco*, sung by Chico Antônio in Rio Grande do Norte in 1929. *Cocos* are an Afro-Brazilian song and dance in 2/4 meter typical of Northeastern coastal zones; the genre fascinated Andrade, who was particularly impressed with the talented improviser Antônio. Writing in *A República do Natal*, Andrade expressed his admiration: "Chico has a formidable social value. He is the most pure expression that I have found of Northeastern coastal musicality. And the people recognize the superiority of Chico Antônio" (*Os Cocos* 379). Andrade's appraisal of the "pure" musical expression of Chico Antônio contributes to the discursive construction of the Northeast as the source of Brazilian musical authenticity. By including interpretations of three *cocos* originally sung by Antônio ("Ô Baiana," "Justino Grande" and "Ê Tum"), A Barca reinforces the vision of Brazilian cultural authenticity as residing in the Northeast.

In most of A Barca's songs, the major shifts between their interpretation and the original sources occur in the realm of sonority. Their interpretation of "Mandei Fazer uma Rede" does not alter the lyrics of the *rojão de roça* gathered in Brejo dos Padres, Pernambuco in 1938, but rather changes the song's sound by elaborating its musical arrangements. Whereas a repetitive chanting dominated the original with distinctive vocal grains providing the only tonal variations, A Barca creates a multi-layered sound with a saxophone solo, a jazz-riff piano providing the melodic base, and subtle percussive elements complementing the harmonization between the male lead and two female vocalists. Their polished version of the "folkloric" source is intended for a public distinct from the people who listened to and performed this song in Brejo dos Padres in the 1930s. The song no longer exists frozen within an archival recording, but is instead put into motion within A Barca's repertoire as they tour the country.

Popular forms provide the basis for A Barca's more explicitly hybrid compositions, which fuse excerpts of songs from the archive with instrumental interludes and poetry recitations. "O Sol Lá Vem" begins with the group's interpretation of a *coco* documented by Andrade in Rio Grande do Norte and concludes with a reading of the last two stanzas of Andrade's poem "O poeta come amendoim." A Barca's version of the *coco* replaces stanzas about the difficulties

faced by a sugar cane worker with lyrics celebrating the national in the face of a globalizing world (*Os Cocos* 65-67). The singer has already traveled to Europe and been all over, yet would not trade any of those foreign lands or their capitals for her native country and its backlands. As the *coco* ends, the piano fades to a subtle presence in the background accompanying a woman's emotional reading of the last stanzas of Andrade's poem. These verses express a love for Brazil rooted in a deeper essence than in the mere happenstance that it is one's country. In Andrade's words:

Brasil amado não porque seja a minha pátria
Pátria é acaso de migrações e do pão-nosso onde Deus der...
Brasil que eu amo porque é o ritmo do meu braço aventureiro,
O gosto dos meus descansos,
O balanço das minhas cantigas amores e danças.
Brasil que eu sou porque é a minha expressão muito engraçada.
("O poeta come amendoim")

The poet's adoration of Brazil is connected to its language, rhythms, adventures, songs, loves, and dances. Andrade's poetic appraisal of Brazil's musical expression parallels the ideas of his musicological writings. For Andrade, the search for the autochthonous always leads to the country's music, rhythm, and language. By including a subdued, emotional reading of the poem, *A Barca* heightens the song's nationalistic sentiment while also indicating their indebtedness to Andrade. Their project dislocates the local musical forms gathered by Andrade, transforms them via contemporary interpretations, and invokes these songs as potential market resources.

While their primary inspiration comes from Andrade's research, *A Barca* also incorporates traditional sambas and other popular forms into their project. Their turn to rural samba may have its roots in Andrade's studies of *pau-lista* samba, as described in "O samba rural paulista." The choice of "Batuque de Pirapora" by São Paulo *sambista* Geraldo Filme indicates a closer approximation to Andrade's samba studies, focusing on rural forms. The song tells the story of samba throughout the state of São Paulo, repeatedly referring to

being baptized in the samba of Pirapora and briefly mentioning the sambas of Piracicaba, Tietê, and Campinas. Filme's samba incorporates elements of *jongos* and drum rhythms learned from his grandfather, as alluded to in the lyric "iniciando o neguinho/ no batuque do terreiro." A Barca's inclusion of this samba reveals an attention to musical history and a desire to highlight often-ignored musical forms.

The presence of the 1931 samba "Patrão, Prenda o Seu Gado" by Pixinguinha, Donga, and João de Baiana on *Turista Aprendiz* similarly signals the group's interest in continuing the interpretation of traditional sambas. As an urban samba, this song would have received scant attention from Andrade. His vision of popular music as purely rural did not correspond to its reality as both a rural and urban phenomenon in the 1920s and 1930s. A more encompassing notion of the "popular" has become increasingly necessary in the intervening years. By including select urban songs, A Barca expands Andrade's understanding of popular music. Their updated version of "Patrão, Prenda o Seu Gado" introduces an instrumental prelude based on the original composition, yet performed on a Fender Rhodes electronic piano and an acoustic guitar. This opening transitions smoothly into the main piece, featuring a lead female vocalist. Congas replace the prelude's electronic piano to maintain the rhythmic base. Additional instruments, including maracas and a piano, become introduced as the song continues towards a more percussive conclusion with whistles, drums, and clapping. Blending supposedly traditional and modern elements in the musical arrangement suggests the hybridization of A Barca's project.

The incorporation of songs learned during A Barca's research in 1998 and 1999 further contributes to the mixture of sources and sounds on their first album. The group interprets "Terra do Caranguejo," a *toada* learned from the well-known *carimbó* group Irmandade de São Benedito in Pará. While in Maranhão, the group recorded a story told by Dico Milano, a tale later paired with percussive elements to create the track "Tã Lá Meu Boi." The album also includes "Vovó, pra que tu qué o didá?" and "Vovó não qué casca de coco no terreiro?" *jongos* learned while visiting the Tamandaré neighborhood of Guaratinguetá in São Paulo's Vale do Paraíba. As with their interpretations of

music documented by Andrade, A Barca adapts songs learned in the field with more complex musical arrangements that impact sonority to create a blend between popular forms and sophisticated musical practices.

Conclusion

A Barca's project can be read as a contemporary response to the call articulated by Mário de Andrade in his 1928 *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira* for "erudite" musicians to incorporate popular forms into their compositions to create a uniquely Brazilian form of art music. To a certain extent, the group's music represents a contemporary extension of the modernist project in the face of new popular forms. While the group casts their project as a continuation of Andrade's research and other attempts to map Brazilian music, their incorporation of popular forms has more in common with the musical fusions produced by the CPC and Tropicália movements of the 1960s, the Movimento Armorial in the 1970s, *mangue* artists in the 1990s, and other contemporary musicians. A Barca distinguishes their project from these movements by turning first towards Andrade's documentation and then to field research to discover popular practices. As they mediate between temporal, regional, and cultural divides, the musicians activate Andrade's archive in their performances.

Like Andrade before them, A Barca views the North and Northeast as the principal source for the cultural uniqueness of Brazil. Their work reflects and reproduces the need to imagine the Northeast as the source of "true Brazilianness." Andrade and other intellectuals viewed the Northeast as a region virtually untouched by changes of industrialization and modernization. Imagined as relatively free from external influences, the Northeast came to represent a repository of cultural diversity reflecting a mixture of European, African, and indigenous traditions. For artists and intellectuals attempting to unify the nation, this blending of people and practices came to represent the essence of Brazil. As Larry Crook explains in his exploration of Northeastern traditions at the "heartbeat" of the modern Brazilian nation:

It is this 'other Brazil'—the Brazil of the Northeast, with the major colonial urban centers of Salvador da Bahia and Recife, Pernambuco, on the

tropical Atlantic coast and a vast rural region in the interior known as the *sertão*—that today’s Brazilians perceive as the wellspring of their country’s ‘authentic’ national character and the home of its ‘purest’ traditional culture and music. (9)

The rest of Brazil wants the Northeast to remain frozen in time as a refuge from modernity and home to the popular musical practices that make Brazilian culture distinct. Nevertheless, the region cannot and does not exist in a vacuum. With the spread of new technologies, the rise of global media, and the importance of organizations like Mercosul and UNESCO, the region has become an increasingly integral part of the nation and the world. As popular traditions interact with technological and artistic developments in global circuits, cultural practices continue to evolve, making it unlikely that A Barca would encounter a musician like Chico Antônio performing his “pure” musical expression were they to travel to Natal today. While the group embarks on a temporal and spatial return to this imagined place of the authentic, a physical return to the era and place documented by Andrade is clearly impossible.

While A Barca views the Northeast as a repository for popular cultural forms, the group interprets these songs not as static artifacts in need of preservation, but rather as living forms evolving through their adaptation. The group brings the past into the present, setting popular culture into motion. Their interpretation of these songs develops a new sonority that appeals to audiences who would most likely not have encountered these popular sources without the group. As they transform popular sources and transmit embodied knowledge in their performances, A Barca emerges as a cultural mediator moving between regions, classes, and moments in time. Within Brazilian intellectual and cultural history, the figure of cultural mediation is a common one that is both celebrated and contested. While mediators often introduce marginalized cultural practices to a broader public, they receive criticism for their position of authority, their interference in the popular, and their transformation of these forms. A Barca does not escape such critiques as it occupies the precarious position of mediator. Newspaper reviews have observed that A Barca’s music lacks the sadness inherent to the popular in their stylized, brilliant,

and colorful interpretations (“Falta tristeza...”). Their songs, however, do contain an emotional power; the reviewer is really commenting on a perceived authenticity of the popular that, in his view, A Barca lacks. Critiques of A Barca’s project on the basis of its authenticity and positionality are misdirected, as the group does not claim to be “authentically” duplicating the source material. They approach these popular forms first as musicians interested in interpreting these songs and secondarily as researchers. Whereas a research impulse guided Andrade’s project, A Barca instead focuses on the embodied experience of these songs to create well-executed, musically ambitious pieces that introduce these forms to a broader public throughout Brazil. The group negotiates a way to insert traditional, local practices into the modern market, albeit an alternative one to the transnational record industry. Perhaps A Barca’s contemporary interpretations of archived rhythms will find new audiences among students and aficionados of Brazilian culture abroad in the years to come facilitated by social networks, educational endeavors, and other alternative venues. In the meantime, they continue to put popular culture into motion among new generations of Brazilian listeners.

Notes

¹ A recent article by Hamilton-Tyrell analyzes Andrade’s musicological work, highlighting his nationalist impulses and the links between this musical project and *modernismo*. Coli outlines the trajectory of Andrade’s musicological writings, while Wisnik analyzes Andrade’s musical nationalism and its conceptions of “authenticity” and “popular.”

² Béhague provides an overview of recent scholarly trends within the field of Brazilian music. Scholars like McCann and Vianna highlight the connection between samba, the state, and policies of cultural nationalism.

³ The best-known *mangue* musicians include Chico Science and Nação Zumbi. Their fusion of traditional rhythms of the Northeast with rap, funk, and reggae raises questions about “authenticity,” as well as the relationship between the local and the global, and the national and the regional. See Galinsky for further discussion of the *mangue* movement. More recently, Cordel do Fogo Encantado has incorporated *samba de coco* and other music of the Pernambucan *sertão* into a heterogeneous contemporary sound, as analyzed in Sharp’s doctoral dissertation.

⁴ See Slater for an overview of the Movimento Armorial and its relationship to popular cultures and traditions. Warner and Nascimento focus on Antônio Nóbrega, a musician linked to this movement who continues performing traditional folk songs.

⁵ Stroud’s recent study of the place of tradition within popular Brazilian music analyzes these projects and the construction of MPB as a commercial and ideological category.

⁶ See Hollanda for an overview of the CPC, as well a personal reflection on the social, political, and cultural activities of the 1960s. The articles collected in *Balço de bossa e outras bossas*, the essays by Schwarz and Chauí on politics and popular culture, and Dunn's book provide additional information on Tropicália and the cultural debates of the 1960s. Although not the emphasis of this paper, Brazilian politics and culture in the 1960s re-examined questions of the national-popular originally posed by artists and intellectuals like Andrade in the 1920s and 1930s. Just as the legacy of Brazilian modernism implicitly shaped the cultural manifestations of the 1960s, the experiences of the CPC and Tropicália impact the work of contemporary musicians.

⁷ This paper focuses on *Turista Aprendiz* (CPC-UMES, 2000), which draws most heavily on Andrade's work. Their subsequent albums (*Baião de Princesas*, 2002, and *Trilha, Toada e Trupê*, 2005) showcase their own field research.

⁸ Although A Barca directly refers to Andrade's work, other examples could inform their idea of the socially responsible artist. Carlos Lyra, Nara Leão, and other artists affiliated with the CPC hoped to cause radical change through their art and music by, for instance, incorporating rhythms of the *morro* and the *sertão*. This interest in Northeastern popular culture continued with Teatro Arena and Opinião, protest songs, and Tropicália. Perhaps A Barca is hesitant to return to models of social and political commitment from the 1960s given their failure and the subsequent dictatorship. It is still worth noting that A Barca emerges in a cultural climate influenced by the legacy of the 1960s. The CPC finds their contemporary corollary in the Pontos de Cultura promoted by Tropicália musician Gilberto Gil as Minister of Culture from 2003 to 2008.

⁹ Andrade's term "art" music usually refers to "classical" music.

¹⁰ García Canclini distinguishes between traditionalists, who envisioned "authentic" national cultures, and modernizers, who conceived of art for art's sake.

¹¹ Travassos notes this contradiction between the modern and the traditional in Andrade's work, a double "loyalty" that complicates the evaluation of his legacy.

¹² All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.

¹³ Ochoa describes this presence of folkloric investigations throughout Latin America in the first half of the twentieth century. Ochoa's analysis of local musics in the age of globalization provides a general theoretical framework that can be applied to A Barca's project. However, A Barca approaches "local" music of the North and Northeast as "learning tourists" from São Paulo, establishing a relationship with the local distinct from the forms studied by Ochoa.

¹⁴ Ochoa addresses the blurring of boundaries between local musics and mass musical forms in an era of globalization, where technology, the culture industries and institutions interact with and transform the local. The works of García Canclini, Ortiz, and Yúdice contribute to the general debates about these relationships.

¹⁵ While recognizing the relative nature of authenticity, ethnomusicologists Bedenbach and Kukrigl highlight its value as "an effective gate-keeping concept" (112). While they claim that "something is authentic when we can trace its historical roots," they also realize that "roots are relative." Following the lines of Ortiz and Bredenbach and Kukrigl, I would argue that "authenticity" is a construction often based in relative historical roots.

¹⁶ García Canclini notes that modernization did not erase "folklore" nor suppress traditional popular cultures in Mexico and the Andes. Instead, these cultures have developed by being transformed. Processes of modernization similarly innovate musical forms within the Brazilian Northeast as documented by Stroud, Sharp, Galinsky, and Crook.

¹⁷ Vocalist Juçara Marçal received a degree in journalism from ECA-USP and a master's in Brazilian literature from FFLCH-USP. The band's pianist Lincoln Antonio was born in

Santos and moved São Paulo to study composition at Unesp. Guitarist Chico Saraiva, who won the 6th Prêmio Visa MPB for composers in 2003, grew up in Florianópolis and received his degree in popular music at Unicamp. Thomas Roher, the band's violinist and saxophonist, is a conservatory-trained musician from Switzerland, but has lived in Brazil since 1995. In their rhetoric, the group often highlights the parallels between their project and a journey. Their website claims, "A Barca: expedição musical rumo ao maravilhoso," translated as "A Barca: Musical travel around brazilian marvellous" (sic). They position themselves as musical travelers in search of the marvelous. While having an English version of their website points to a desired global presence, the translation errors suggests they have yet to fully attain this place.

¹⁸ The category of MPB (*música popular brasileira*) is generally used as an umbrella term to refer to "cultured popular" Brazilian music produced and distributed through the major labels post-*bossa nova*. Napolitano notes that the category developed as a marketing tool. When CPC-UMES refers to "MPB da qualidade," they want to distinguish between the "alternatives" on their label and the musicians included in the major recording industries' "MPB."

¹⁹ The group's CDs and DVDs are not easily purchased from abroad. Whereas it is possible to buy CDs through their Portuguese website, the English translation does not feature a purchase option. Currently on Amazon.com, a search for A Barca returns *Turista Aprendiz* as an imported CD selling for \$20.30 or \$32.23 new, yet temporarily out of stock. A used-version for \$17.07 is available. Their international visibility is very limited, especially when compared to US-based bands incorporating Northeastern Brazilian rhythms like Forró in the Dark and Nation Beat. On Amazon.com, it is possible to purchase CDs and MP3 downloads from these bands. A Barca's relation to the global recording industry remains peripheral as they opt for alternative educational and performance circuits within Brazil.

²⁰ While I use the "grain of voice" primarily to refer to the textures of voices and their distinctive sonority, emotion and essence, Roland Barthes examines this notion of "the grain of the voice" in music and literature through the lens of semiotic thought.

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