

## Modernity and the imaginary sounds of Brazil

### A modernidade e os imaginários sonoros do Brasil

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**Abstract** *This paper discusses the importance of the radio in the construction of imaginary in modern Brazil. There is a discussion about the concept of imaginary supported on authors such as: Mix (2006), Durand (1988; 1997; 2004) and Baczko (1985), the research intends to expand this concept including the imaginary sounds. We argue that music is an important element of the construction process of identities and imagined communities, especially from Modernity on, when it begins to be listened on the radio and mixes global, national and local ingredients.*

**Keywords:** *Imaginary sounds; Music; Radio*

**Resumo** *O artigo tem como proposta analisar a importância do rádio na construção de imaginários no Brasil moderno. Discute-se o conceito de imaginário com base em autores como Mix (2006), Durand (1988; 1997; 2004) e Baczko (1985), e busca-se ampliá-lo incluindo o conceito de imaginários sonoros. Defende-se que a música é elemento marcante na construção de identidades e*

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*comunidades imaginadas, especialmente a partir da modernidade, quando passa a ser ouvida pelo rádio e a mesclar elementos culturais globais, nacionais e locais.*

**Palavras-chave:** *Imaginários sonoros; Música; Rádio*

**Resumen** *El artículo analiza la importancia de la radio en la construcción de los imaginarios en el Brasil moderno. Discute el concepto de imaginario apoyado en autores como Mix (2006), Durand (1988; 1997; 2004) y Baczko (1985), tratando de ampliarlo con la adición del concepto de imaginarios sonoros. Suponiendo que la música es importante elemento en la construcción de identidades y comunidades imaginadas, especialmente a partir de la Modernidad, cuando empieza a ser escuchada por la radio y a mezclar elementos culturales globales, nacionales y locales.*

**Palabras-clave:** *Imaginarios sonoros; Música; Radio*

## Introduction

Authors of different areas of knowledge have examined the study and the definition of the concept of imaginary, even if they admit that it is imprecise, complex and polysemic, in spite of this they defend the importance of its discussion. Some researches which were carried out by researchers associated with the Centro de Cultura e Imagem da América Latina, da Universidade Federal do Paraná (Cecial/UFPR) – Latin-American Culture and Image Centre of the Federal University of the State of Paraná – meet with the difficulties, but also with the findings of the research provided by the interdisciplinary debate of this topic. In this article, we intend to present an analysis based upon the studies about imaginary sounds and to take a new look at individual researches which were carried out before (KASEKER, 2012; GILLER, 2013; PETERS, 2005) concerning radio, jazz and *choro* [mandolin, guitar, *cavaquinho*, tambourine and wind-instruments; the name means weeping] in Curitiba (capital of the State of Paraná).

The purpose of this article is to analyse the importance of the radio in the construction of imaginaries in modern Brazil and to initially discuss the concept of imaginary in order to broaden it afterwards by including the concept of imaginary sounds. We present music, especially jazz and *choro* as significant elements in the construction of imagined identities and communities<sup>5</sup>, based upon modernity, when people start to listen to it on the radio and when it begins mixing global, national and local cultural elements.

## About the imaginary and its mediations

Ever since the beginning of human existence, man demonstrated high symbolizing capacity and he used this competence in order to communicate, conquer and exercise power. According to Durand, the artistic creation must be analysed as part of a Poetics of the Imaginary, which

<sup>5</sup> In the terms as defined by Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities* (2008).

interprets the recurrent symbols and images as unconscious projections of the archetypes in which they configure themselves in the depths of the collective unconscious. Gilbert Durand's Theory of the Imaginary is based upon Bachelard and it is also influenced by Jung's psychoanalysis works.

Due to its importance for the theoretical development of the topic, it is convenient here to recuperate its conceptualisation of imaginary as a "set of images and relationships of images which constitutes the thought capital of the *Homo sapiens*" (DURAND, 1997, p. 18). In another moment, the author defines the imaginary as "the faculty of symbolisation from where all the fears, all the hopes and their cultural fruits continuously spring forth since around a million and a half years in which the *Homo erectus* stood on the surface of the earth" (DURAND, 2004, p. 117).

As a result of the researches in his Centre for Imaginary Studies, Durand came to the formulation of a General Theory of the Imaginary, the synthesis of which can be presented in the following way (1988, p. 78):

We must abandon the distinction between the rational consciousness and the psychic phenomena and integrate the syntax of reason with the consensus of the general imaginary. There is no rupture between real and imaginary.

Imaginary and thought are integrated with the symbolic function. Imagination is a general factor of psychosocial equilibrium.

The imaginary presents itself as a tension between two cohesion forces, two regimes, each related to images of two antagonistic universes.

These regimes unite themselves in time, in a narrative line and form a system (more than a synthesis).

According to Bronislaw Baczko, from a sociological perspective, the imaginary and the symbolic are narrowly related, since the social imaginary is based upon symbolic systems and operates by means of them, which, on their part, are constructed on the basis of the social agents' experience, desires, aspirations and motivations (1985, p. 311). The imaginary is elaborated and consolidated collectively, as an answer to the real or potential conflicts, divisions and violence in social life. Hence, it acts as a regulating force of collective life, to the extent that it defines

identities, elaborates determined representations of itself, establishes and distributes social roles and positions, dictates common creeds and constructs good behaviour patterns. According to Baczko, the imaginary interprets reality, stimulates the adhesion to determined systems of values and at the same time motivates us into action; it is the target of disputes, besides being intelligible and communicable by means of language.

One of the functions of the social imaginaries consists in the organisation and control of collective time on the symbolic level. These imaginaries actively intervene in the collective memory, for which, as we said, the events very often count less than the representations to which they give rise and which frame them. The social imaginaries still operate more vigorously, maybe in the production of future visions, especially in the projections of collective anxieties, hopes and dreams about the future (BACZKO, 1985, p. 312).

To complete our analysis, still with reference to social imaginaries, we can add Castoriadis (1986)'s perspective, who observes that one of the forms of expression of the imaginary are the institutions, because they exist and are stimulated by significations which do not refer neither to reality nor to logic. They refer to the social imaginary, which is instituted and instituting, the task of which it is to assure the continuity of society, the reproduction and the repetition of the same forms which regulate life in society. According to this author, the concept of imaginary will also have to include the radical (individual) imagination, which represents the breaches, the non-established, the resistance, the creation in front of the established social order.

Marilena Chauí, in *Brasil: mito fundador e sociedade autoritária* [*Brazil: founding myth and authoritarian society*], approaches some aspects of our imagined nation, by describing diverse expressions which are present in the popular Brazilian imaginary. The idea that we are a “gift of God and of Nature”, “when you plant everything works”, “a pacific and orderly people”, etc. are some of these creeds that are disseminated in the common Brazilian thought, which show the “strong presence of a homogeneous representation the Brazilians have of the country and of themselves” (2000, p. 7). It is a generalised creed which

has a great force of persuasions in the sense of resolving “a social tension in an imaginary way” and of producing a “contradiction which is unperceived” (2000, p. 8). An example of this could be the social *apartheid* covered by the creed that we live in a country which has no racial discrimination.

In order to work on this question, the author uses the term founding myth as a theoretical concept and she affirms:

the founding myth offers an initial repertoire of representations of reality and, at each moment of the historical formation, these elements are reorganised from the point of view of their internal hierarchy [...] and of the broadening of their meaning [...]. Thus, the ideologies, which necessarily accompany the historical formation movement, nourish themselves with the representations produced by the foundation and update them in order to adapt them to the new historical era. It is exactly because of this that, with new garments, the myth can repeat itself indefinitely (idem, p. 10).

In the constitution of the Brazilian nation, the radio started acting in a third stage, after the definition of the territory, the articulation with language, religion, and race, the phase of national conscience began. In the second phase, from 1880 to 1918, according to Chauí, a “civic religion” was created, “patriotism”, which was converted into nationalism, reinforced “with feelings and symbols of an imaginary community whose tradition began to be invented” (2000, p. 18). From then on, the “nation began to be considered as something which would always have existed, since immemorial times, because its roots lie in the very people that constitutes it” (2000, p. 19). The persuasion of this “national idea” led to the ‘national question’ in the sense of marking the civic celebrations as a “militant nationalism”. The idea of a “national character” conceives the nation as a totalised greatness, whereas the idea of “national identity” constructs itself as “incomplete and defective totality”, because it presupposes the “relationship with the different” (idem, p. 27). The author explains: “it is through the image of the complete development of the other that our ‘identity’, defined as underdeveloped, appears defective and made of lacks and privations” (idem). And she completes: “Thus, Brazil’s identity, constructed in the perspective of backwardness

and underdevelopment, is rendered through that which is lacking, by the privation of those characteristics which would make it full and complete, that is to say, developed” (idem, p. 28).

This moment coincides with the advent of the radio in Brazil, at the beginning strongly influenced by the more developed European radio and mainly by the North-American radio. In this modern Brazilian radio, they played especially foreign musical genres, even before the existence of the idea of what a “national music” would be.

### **In defence of the existence of the imaginary sound**

When we speak of imaginary, we are speaking of that which exists in the imagination, that is to say, an iconic discourse, on the one hand and, on the other hand, a documentary *corpus*, a set of visual documents as a semantic unit. “The national imaginary is a reference for the citizen, whereas the North-American iconographic imaginary is a *corpus* of study” (MIX, 2006, p. 19).

According to Mix, “the term imaginary refers to a world, a culture and a visual intelligence which present themselves as a set of physical or virtual icons, they are propagated through a diversity of means and interact with the mental representations” (2006, p. 18). In his studies on the imaginary in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the author finds out that we go through a radical epistemological transition, leaving the civilisation of the text we read in order to live in the civilization of the text we see. Mix believes that, in order to understand this civilisation of synthetic and ideographic character, it is necessary to use no more the alphabetic intelligence, but the visual intelligence. The comprehension of the world does no more go necessarily through the analytico-discursive aspects.

*Knowledge is now acquired mainly through vision and audition.. This implies a simultaneous intelligence because audition and vision permit the perception of various synchronic signals, on which we cannot impose an order of meaning. We noticed a clear diminution of the liking for reading, in exchange for a considerable increase of the consumption of images (MIX, 2006, p. 19-20).*

The technical means of reproduction create an imaginary universe in which new ways of seeing and listening appear not only as the product of a refinement of the senses, but as the expression of new social patterns. According to Mix, the images reproduce themselves so quickly that there is no time to develop the critical gaze. “*There is no reality without interpretation, as there is neither an ‘innocent eye’ nor an ‘innocent ear’*” (MIX, 2006, p. 26). Mix makes a distinction between mental imaginary – relative to the perceptive references, to visual thought, to dreams and to the visions sheltered in the unconscious – and visual imaginary – relative to the collection of political caricatures, comic strips, graffiti, cartoons and other caricatures –, he is especially interested in the analysis of the visual imaginary. Mix’s work examines the gaze and the construction of meaning on the basis of the images, but he gives clues for those who want to understand how this process occurs as far as audition is concerned.

The construction of imaginaries occurs on the basis of the use of the images, since they condense social realities. The way of seeing which is proper to the audience of a period of time constructs itself in the social groups and reflects their customs, interests and values and it reproduces stereotypes (MIX, 2006, p. 23). It is important to emphasise that, according to Mix, the study of the imaginaries can and must precisely deal with this heterogeneous materials, which, as it seems to us, is linked to the way in which different sound images and their expressive forms will construct that which we identify as Imaginary Sounds.

With the electronic and digital media, the images multiplied, the access was facilitated and the reach of these discourses broadened as well as the risk that we are being manipulated by them, without having time for a critical and reflective thought. On the basis of these reflections, we can think about the mental images which are constructed through listening. The audition situates us, remembers, it fixes identities and appurtenances. Its synaesthetic and multi-sensory character activates other senses; it creates mental images and associates them with vision, with smell, with taste and with tactile sense in order to register experiences and memories. According to Simmel, the superiority of seeing with respect to listening represented a loss of sensorial experience, which disori-

ents us, makes us lonelier and confused (1927). On the other hand, the more noisy world provokes that which Wisnik denominates indiscriminate listening, in which a blackout of the sense occurs (1989, p. 55).

The indiscriminate listening to anything is non listening, but Wisnik alerts that this kind of blackout of the sense imposes a challenge on us: “to listen to the place towards which the sense displaces itself” (1989, p. 55). According to Wisnik, in the case of music, for example, we must analyse the listening of our time under the paradigm, which breaks with the occidental tradition of tonal music, in order to mix democratically with oriental experiences in which the pulse, the tempo and the rhythm are newly valorised. We must understand that music goes through cycles, in which the cultures define the frontiers between that which is sound and that which is noise. “The expansion of the mechanical and artificial world creates sound landscapes of which noise becomes an integral and inevitable element and impregnates the musical textures” (1989, p. 47). The author distinguishes the dominant modes of listening, which are based on the repetition of the recessive forms of listening, like that of contemplation and rite.

The new shocks provoked on listening in our time, which is influenced by the technological, economic and social innovations are added to this new paradigm, which Wisnik mentions. From the recording of the LP, with the concept of side A and side B for the choice of the sequence of the songs, the recording in a continuous sequence of the CDs to the fortuitous listening of different musical styles and genres provided by the computer and by digital players.

In the same way, the auditory sense can be helpful for dissimulation. Adorno had already pointed out a transformation in the use of the senses by defending that modernity promotes a regression in hearing. In capitalist society, “light” music is a mere entertainment; it frees the listener from thinking and serves only as a background. “If nobody is no more able to speak really, it is also obvious that nobody is able to listen any more” (ADORNO, 1980, p. 80). Even classical music gains a new “value”, that of consumption, that is to say, that which is important is that it is consumed, even if it is not understood.

In the society of the image, in which the sound seems to have less value, Baitello questions: are we not becoming deaf because of the devaluation of one of our senses? “Do the deaf, who have the capacity to hear, but who do not want to hear, not have time or do they not pay attention to what they hear? Literally do they not lend ears to the fact that they hear?” (1999, p. 55)

Technology without the development of the capacity to read and hear the meaning of things tends to lead us to a condition of increasing blindness and deafness. This complementary character can be considered a synaesthetic process in which images, which pertain to different sensorial worlds, unite. According to Haye, this synaesthesia is an experience in which the stimulation of a sense provokes a perception which would normally be produced by another one. The images can be visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory or tactile, the results of diverse sensorial impressions. And imagination has also a character which is complementary to the very decoding of messages. “*The binomial imagination-decoding cannot be inattentive because perception constitutes a creative process, overflowing with cognitivity, sensoriality, and emotiveness during which one receives, internalises and processes a number of images*” (HAYE, 2003, p. 51)

This would explain, for example, why we are familiar with the cry of Brazil’s Independence without ever having heard it, because the process of knowledge construction of this historical event created an imaginary sound, based upon discourses and images which are also constructed, thus they make it “real” (KASEKER, 2012, p. 38).

In his studies on the processes of cultural mediation in Latin America, Martín-Barbero had already pointed out the importance of the radio in societies that experience multiple temporalities, in which a part of the population still bases its daily life on orality, allied with technologies such as radiophonic communication. Due to this factor, the radio had a fundamental role in the formation of local identities and solidarities, besides being politically instrumentalised (2003).

But how does the construction of meaning for that which is heard occur? Shaeffer distinguishes three levels of auditory perception: to hear,

to listen to, to recognise and to understand. The first stage, to hear, refers to the spontaneous perception of the energetic action traduced by the sound and represents the index of the sound emission. To listen to would be more related to the subject and to his raw perception of the sound. It is in the phase of recognition that the subject would associate the sound with anterior experiences, with present dominant interests and he makes a selection and an appreciation of what is being heard. It is only in the phase of comprehension that the qualified perceptions are oriented towards a particular form of knowledge and towards the significations, which presupposes a certain sound language (*apud* ALVES, 2008). This explanation reinforces the thesis that the radio plays a fundamental role in the formation of the imagineries in Brazilian modernity, to the extent that it associates experiences, influences the musical taste and constructs identities.

### **Global, national and local images on the radio waves**

The story of the radio in Brazil begins in 1922, with the first official transmission on *Praia Vermelha* [name of a beach], in Rio de Janeiro, with the participation of the President of the Republic, Epitácio Pessoa, during the commemorations of the Centenary of Brazil's Independence. But it was only in the 1930s that this media expanded, through the hands of the then president Getúlio Vargas, who saw in the radio an opportunity to propagate his political ideas. And it was precisely by means of Vargas' action that the radio reached its golden age, times in which Rádio Philips was taken over by the *União* [Union: Brazil's federal government] and it became the Rádio Nacional, do Rio de Janeiro [National Radio of Rio de Janeiro], with the biggest artistic cast of all times in Brazilian radio.

The radio contributed to the formation of the idea of what would be Brazilian music from the moment on which Getúlio Vargas institutionalised the Dia do Samba [Day of the Samba], defined the period of carnival with a fixed date and the composers began to compose *sambas de exaltação* [literally: exaltation sambas: sambas with long melodies and lyrics which make an apology of patriotism and deal with nationalist

topics] and set up a propitious scenario for the propagation of the samba as national music. This phenomenon did not extinguish the regional sonorities, but it set the same type of samba for the whole Brazil, an icon of the *brasilidade* [Brazilian-ness]. Hence, to the detriment of the *choro* and even of the jazz bands, the samba became the national and modern music. But it was also thanks to the radio that the *choro* and jazz continued on stage, due to the large propagation on the radio waves at the moment in which samba imposed itself.

In the universe of the *chorões curitibanos* [the musicians who play *choro* from Curitiba], on the basis of interviews and participant observation, Peters (2005) found elements which identified the origin and the cadence of the *choro* they played in that city. Born in the live presentations on the Rádio Clube Paranaense (PRB-2), on the one hand, but also on the basis of the listening to the *choro* played by the Rádio Nacional of Rio de Janeiro, the local *choro* was gaining its proper accent.

In the domain of jazz, Giller (2013) reunited data and systematised information related to the insertion of jazz in the State of Paraná. The studies were carried out in musical private and institutional collections, in the period from 2002 to 2012, in Curitiba. Photographs, scores, documents, books, news in newspapers and magazines formed a descriptive register of the lives of the musicians and of the musical groups.<sup>6</sup>

About the radiophonic listening, Kaseker (2012) tried to regain aspects of the imaginary relative to that period of the radio on the basis of the memories of the first generation of listeners who, by telling their reminiscences to the new generations, perpetuate an idea that the golden age of the radio was “good times”. The families used to listen to the radio, sitting together in their living room and the radio was considered an icon of modernity. The experience of this first generation of listeners is very different from that which is experienced by their grandsons in the present time, but it still lets the mark of that period in the Brazilian identity.

<sup>6</sup> Research carried out in the project Curitiba: Fragmentos Musicais da Década de 1920 a 1940 – A Presença do Jazz na Cultura Paranaense [Curitiba: Musical Fragments of the Decade from 1920 to 1940 – The Presence of Jazz in the Culture of the State of Paraná]

We refer to the Golden Age of the Brazilian radio when we deal with the period between 1940 and 1950, when the *radionovelas* [radio serials] were on the air, the *radiojornais*, [news and music channel] humorous and sports programmes, musical auditorium programmes with the greatest exponents of national music. A time in which Brazil underwent transformations from the rural environments to urbanity and it was characterised by deep modifications in life style of whom lived in the cities. (CALABRE, 2002)

In order to understand this process, it is convenient to emphasise Hobsbawn's idea of modernity as a form of being "up to date" and to express a moment marked by the intensification of life in the cities and by the establishment of an urban culture which was generated around the daily life of the main population centres.

Since its appearance, in the 1920s, as one of the icons of modernity in Brazil, the radio was the central element in the construction of the meaning of the Brazilian nation, especially from the 1930s on, when Getúlio Vargas used this means politically, regulated advertising and instituted censorship, thus he opened space to the transmission of his values and oriented the number of contents which had to be broadcast. It was due to

the radio to assume the role of integrator, inserted in the emerging populist principles, providing, especially by the means of music, the chords of national identity. Thus, with the intervention of the State, the radio is the essential instrument for the process of appropriation, re-elaboration of the transmission of cultural manifestations of popular origin by the dominant classes (DUVAL, 2002, p. 92).

In January 1937, Getúlio Vargas signed the Lei nº 385 [Law nº 385] which stimulated the artistic activities and obliged the inclusion of native Brazilian authors in all the musical programmes. In the music competitions for carnival, the jury prevented the inscription of music with foreign rhythms. With the success of the Brazilian music abroad, mainly in the United States, in January 1939 the *Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda* [Press and Advertising Department] promoted the *Dia da Música Popular* [Day of Popular Music] at the Feira de Amostras [Sam-

ple Fair] of Rio de Janeiro, with the presence of de 200,000 people, who wanted to see Carmem Miranda sing “*Boneca de Piche*” [Pitch Doll], near Almirante. During the *Estado Novo* [New State: the period from 1937-1945 under the leadership of Getúlio Vargas] in order to put pressure on the authors of music, the DIP did not only use the power of veto of censorship but also the personal contacts with the concern to include some composers in its crews. It was a technique which was used for all the artistic activities and of communication, because, besides the composers, professionals linked to theatre, journalism, radio and cinema worked at the *Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda*. It tried to avoid the tone of the *malandragem* [*malandro* means “sneaky”] of the sambas of 1930, in order to exalt labour. Besides the radios, the singers also acted in the casinos, to which they were very much linked, because they propagated the same artists and singers and divided the expenses/costs to have these “posters”, as the stars and the main artists were known at that time. (DUVAL, 2002)

The period after the Second World War was also marked by the beginning of a great invasion of the Latin American rhythms, mainly from Cuba. The radio broadcasts dedicated great part of their programmes to the boleros, rumbas and mambos and to the Argentine tango. On March 8<sup>th</sup> 1940, Getúlio incorporated the *Rádio Nacional*, the newspapers *A Manhã* e *A Noite* and the magazine *Carioca*, the Rio Editora [Rio Publisher], the Companhia Estrada de Ferro São Paulo-Rio Grande [Railway Company] and thousands of *alqueires* [Brazilian land measure = 24,200 m<sup>2</sup> in the State of São Paulo] of land in the States of Paraná and Santa Catarina to the patrimony of the União. In 1941, the *Rádio Nacional* became one of the five most powerful radio broadcast stations of the world; it broadcasted programmes in four languages, all oriented by the *Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda*.

This articulation resulted in the transformation of these manifestations into national symbols. Since 1937, the radio began to incommode certain more conservative segments of society due to its tendency to broadcast the songs the people did and sang. The sambas, which were branded as “unbearable howl” by the elites, removed the radio from its

supposed educational function. According to Martín-Barbero, we see the “cultural emergence of the urban popular” (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 2003, p. 241), mainly by means of the radio. The music appears as one of the main references for the construction of this representation of the urban popular element in the Brazil of the 1930s. The cultural circulation of the permanent retro-alimentation between the radio, the record, the theatre shows, cinemas and the press will confer a new physiognomy upon the cities, imprinting the characteristics of a national identity.

Since the 1920s in Brazil, the popular musical scenario underwent a more and more intense assimilation of foreign music. The trips to Brazil’s inland and the international trips, mainly to France, the arrival of foreign instruments and genres marked this cultural process, which modified the musicality of certain local groups and activated new cultural contexts and sonorities. The advent of the electric recording, in 1927, generated the increase of production and of the consumption of records and gave rise to the so-called phonographic industry in urban daily life. According to Tinhorão, the record companies “stimulated the development of national culture; they were also responsible for the propagation of the rhythms, of the songs and of the North-American customs” (1998, p. 298). It is in this period, for example, that the groups began to wear dinner suit and to replace “the flute by the saxophone, the *cavaquinho* [small four stringed Portuguese guitar family instrument well known in Brazil, where it is used in *choro* and *samba*] by the banjo and the tambourine by the battery of the jazz band and they began to play a *foxtrotezinho*” [a little foxtrot], just for a change (TINHORÃO, 1998, p. 298).

We perceive that the passage from jazz in Brazil during the 1920s and 1940s was surrounded by nuances. We know too that there was a route of jazz between Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, in Argentina, passing through the main cities and ports such as the port of Santos (State of São Paulo), Paranaguá (State of Paraná), Florianópolis (State of Santa Catarina), Porto Alegre (State of Rio Grande do Sul), going to Montevideo, in Uruguay and finally arriving at Buenos Aires, in Argentina. Symbol of the modernity of that time, jazz penetrated into the Brazilian urban culture and established a dialogue and a polemic with the socio-cultural context (GILLER, 2013, p. 63).

Jazz begins as a tradition of the Afro-American culture in North America; it achieves cult status in Europe, mainly in Paris and involves the culture of North America. In Brazil, it absorbs tropical airs. In order to understand this relation, it is convenient to seek the bases in the concepts of “Translation”, presented by Stuart Hall (2006) and in Acácio Piedade’s concept of “Musicality” (1997; 2005; 2011).

The concept of “Translation” concerns the tradition characterised by stability and challenged by cultural translation, in which it is possible to have the strengthening of local identities or a new production of identities. This conception describes the “identity formations which cross and intersect the natural frontiers, composed by people who were for ever dispersed from their native land”, people who “are obliged to negotiate with the new cultures in which they live, without being simply assimilated by them and without completely losing their identities” (HALL, 2006, p. 88).

According to Hall, these cultures are the product of various interconnected histories and cultures and they do not only belong to one, but to various cultures at the same time. According to the author, these subjects carry the features of the cultures which marked them, such as the traditions, the languages and the private stories (2006). This notion serves to understand which social processes contributed to the formation of the Brazilian society of 1930, that experienced modernism and to understand the basic constitution of the native population and of the immigrants.

By dealing with the Brazilian jazz or with the instrumental Brazilian music, Acácio Piedade defends the concept of “musicality friction”. According to this approach, the interaction between the Brazilian and the North-American jazz<sup>7</sup> involves an “inter-social system which exhibits an inequality in its core.” He argues that these “musicalities are in a dialogue with each other but do not mix: the musical-symbolic frontiers are not crossed, but they are the objects of a manipulation which reaffirms the differences” (1997, p. 200).

<sup>7</sup> Acacio Piedade and other authors use the term *North-American* when they refer to the jazz which is produced in the United States of America. This is why we opted to adopt the same term in this article. (PIEADADE, 1997)

In this panorama of multiple configurations, the urban mass established itself around the idea of modernity and occasioned the growth of the entertainment sector and culture consumption and developed the market of popular music. In this scenario, the record patents were created, which transformed the phonographic rights into a great interest of international framework.

Music started to be consumed with more intensity by workers and migrants, each contributing to form determined imaginary sounds. The imaginary understood as a phenomenon, which was constructed by a set of perceptions accumulated during the existence of each one, forms a repertoire of ideas, sounds, images and gestures associated and shared by a reserved social group, which generates a cultural identity or a particular “musicality”. This set of perceptions is processed by diverse practices in a determined historical context, period and social reality which, on its part, suggests a way of thinking and of acting in the involved individuals (GILLER, 2013, p. 55).

According to Giller, the assimilation of such foreign references was part of a survival strategy of the involved subjects, since it guaranteed the musicians’ social insertion. This indicated the group’s modernity which is reflected in the instrumentation, and in the sonority, in the attitude and in the performance – the musicians’ uniforms: polished shiny shoes, trousers with a sharp crease, white shirt, jacket and bow tie.

We can understand entertainment music as the music which is consumed in balls, which were the options the city offered, in clubs, artistic associations and circles, at that time. The formations of regional groups that mainly played the *choro*, a musical genre which was born together with the samba, still existed, even with the effervescence of the jazz bands. In the radio programmes, concerts and more intimate situations the regional groups maintained the Brazilian traditional sonority.

Vinci de Moraes explains that, from the 1930s on, the *chorões* leave the cinemas, theatres and circus and perform more professional activities in the record companies and radio orchestras. It is the time in which they form the groups which will accompany the famous interpreters, ensembles known as “*regionais*” [a “*regional*” is a music ensemble that plays

compositions proper to a region, using typical local instruments]. This produced musicians “who constituted themselves into authentic mediators between the cultural universe of the elite and that of the popular urban culture, between the formal and the informal and between the public and the private spaces” (MORAES, 2000, p. 25).

It is in this moment that foreign genres, basically the North-American musical genres were added to the groups’ musical repertoire, essentially formed by Brazilian music, already intertwined with the European genres strongly inserted in the musical culture with the Portuguese Court’s arrival to Brazil. The North-American music, such as cake-walk and two-step, begins to get to Brazil in 1903, and between 1915 and 1927 a total of one hundred and eighty two new productions were introduced in Brazil in relation to the anterior decade (MELLO, 2007, p. 72).

In Brazil, until the samba imposed itself as a national product, in 1930, the consumption and the production of foxtrot was at its height; the groups’ musical repertoire presented a great variety of genres, reunited local and foreign elements. We noted that this diversity was common at the moment in which the musical milieu had not consolidated the notion of a musical genre which represented any Brazilian identity. This will happen at the beginning of the decade of 1930.

The presence of foxtrots is quite significant in the production of the Brazilian popular composer; it was a respectable element in the development of the composition which dominated the cultural industry of that period. In the Brazilian discography of the site of Revivendo gravadora [record company]<sup>8</sup>, there is the collection *No tempo do fox* [At the time of the foxtrot], which shows forty two pieces which compose the collection and reveals the apogee of the foxtrot in Brazil.

It must be noted that in some scores of that time, composers wrote foxtrots with variations of the foxtrot, fox, *fox-blue*, fox-song or simply fox, fox-cançoneta [cançoneta: light and graceful little song], *fox-cowboy*, *fox-marcha* [fox-style march], fox-sertanejo [the *sertanejo* is the inhabitant of

<sup>8</sup> The objective of *Revivendo Músicas* [Re-experiencing Songs], since 1987, is to preserve the Brazilian Popular Music.

the *sertão*, dry lands of the North East of Brazil, it is the typical music of that region]. The samba was also modified and aggregated genres in configurations such as *samba-marcha* [samba-style march], *fado-samba fado*: [a form of Portuguese music characterized by mournful tunes and lyrics], *guarânia-samb* [slow rhythm ballad, characteristic of Paraguayan music], mazurka-samba, samba-rumba, samba-tango and even samba-boogie, samba-swing, fox-samba or samba-fox. In 1928, it is the *samba-canção* [emphasises the melody over the rhythm and more sentimental and moody lyrics], which appears in the big cities, such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

In the second half of the decade of 1940, the Iberian-American bolero appears and marks the decline of the empire of the foxtrot. Severiano reflects: “since our romantic genre, which was the nearest to the bolero, was the *samba-canção*, it started to grow in an overwhelming way and it eclipsed the *canção ternária* [song with three movements] and the *fox-canção* [fox-song] and it took possession of the space which they occupied until then” (SEVERIANO, 2008, p. 204).

In certain regions of Brazil, some jazz bands finally inserted regional instruments such as the tambourine and the accordion into their ensembles. Some groups did not even have the jazz band-like ensemble, but they called themselves like this due to the modish way of that time. Sérgio Cabral comments that “the fashion of the jazz bands was so overwhelming that even the cord orchestras, that generally played in the cafés and in the elegant tea rooms, started to call themselves jazz bands” (CABRAL, 1997, p. 100). Tinhorão also affirms that “during the 1920s the jazz bands became more and more popular in big Brazilian cities, where the kind of popular band that would like to seem modern started to call itself jazz band” (TINHORÃO, 1956, p. 46).

As far as *choro* is concerned, Peters emphasises that this period was the time of the musicians’ professionalisation of the professionals of the local radio:

Another aspect of that time of the affirmation of the national music which must be emphasised refers to the curiosity and to the initial self-education of the radio, which were commented on in interviews with the ex-direc-

tors of the Rádio Clube Paranaense of Curitiba, Euclides Cardoso and Renato Mazânek, who by remembering how they began, well delimited their pioneering work and how they passed through different posts, from porter to director of the radio they had to learn everything by themselves. Amateurism was the strongest characteristic of the broadcast stations at their beginnings. Another characteristic of the broadcast stations, which the interviewees also remembered, was the experience of playing in the aquarium, soon extinguished due to the audience's search for the broadcast stations in order to see the artists. *Seu* [short form of *senhor*: mister] Oscar Fraga, violinist of the regional of Janguito, comments that in the PRB-2 there was an enormous, "uncommon", glass pane which separated the musicians from the audience: they were sitting in the rows of a kind of stadium, heard the songs, but they, without sound, only saw the applause, they did not hear them, due to this separation (PETERS, 2005, p. 50-51).

In Curitiba, the Rádio Clube Paranaense (PRB-2) maintained an auditorium of almost 400 seats in rua [street] Barão do Rio Branco, which was inaugurated in 1941. A phase of varieties, humour and freshmen and auditorium programmes began. In this same year, one of the episodes, which was most remembered by whom listened to these programmes occurred, when Orlando Silva sang "without microphone" from the balcony of the radio for the people who were in the street because they could not enter to watch the show in the auditorium of the broadcast station. This episode did justice to Orlando Silva's acknowledgment as the singer of the crowds.

That year also marked the appearance of two *regionals*: the regional of the PRB-2, under Gedeon da Souza's direction (interpreting a programme called Regional typically Brazilian songs that accompanied the regional singers who acted at the broadcast station) and the *regional* of the Otto brothers (PETERS, 2005, p. 51).

In 1950, a programme presented the "Conjunto da Saudade" [Nostalgia Ensemble] that experienced again the most beautiful musical pages of former times and Janguito do Rosário's *regional* "Calouros B-2" [Freshmen B2] presented by Mário Vendramel, who had also the best auditorium programmes such as "O Expresso das Quintas" [The Thursdays

Express] and “Sergio Fraga”. It was the golden age of the auditorium programmes and of the polyvalent professionals. (KASPCHATK, 1999; MENDONÇA, 1996)

To remember all these programmes, which existed, becomes valid because they are the reference of the listening to the songs that were played. That is to say, what we notice, besides the improvised and amateurish beginning of the radio technicians and directors, is that the musicians, for the most part, did not have a formal musical education, availing themselves of informal learning of the listening in live shows in squares, clubs, casinos or through the auditorium programmes on the radio with the participation of the *regionals* in order to learn how to play “from hearing” the songs of that moment.

Around 1967, the cast of the radio-theatre of Rádio Clube Paranaense was dismantled, which during more than ten years had dominated the audience in the State of Paraná. The broadcast station considered the maintenance of the cast very expensive; it was confronted with a new-born adversary: television. Probably with the end of the cast of actors occurred the dismissal of the bands and *regionals* that ended up occupying other spaces in order to continue with their music and their bread and butter.

Television provoked a reconfiguration of the musical practices and of its broadcasting spaces, but there was a process of reinsertion of these social agents into new spaces. According to Peters, the university campuses and the music conservatoire started to be interested in those musical genres, in which the *regionals* and the *choro* groups went on propagating their typical expressive forms (2007). This process, which started to gain form from the end of the 1970s on, have properly marked the design of these imaginary sounds and gained density and strength due to their links with the identity and the memory of the city.

## Final considerations

By articulating modernity to the imaginary sounds, we are led to trace the multiple ways which constitute them. Ways which lead us to think

that the imaginary sounds condense, express and give basis to other imaginaries, such as the national imaginary, directly linked to the question of a Brazilian identity, in a relationship, which, far from being harmonic, has in its basis the tensions and the conflicts between the diverse ethnic groups that constitute the Brazilian population; between the cultural expressions of a literate elite and the popular, between rural-based traditions confronted with the urban way of life, between the expression of a “national” culture facing the foreign influences and between the expressions recognised as “modern” and developed and the archaic forms which exist in our society.

By means of the radio broadcasting, thousands of listeners had access to the sonorous newness. For many musicians the radio was the only means in order to absorb the foreign genres of that period. The radio meets with Brazil’s social miscegenation and the groups’ musical repertoire presented a great variety of genres, which already reunited local and foreign elements. This diversity marked the moment in which the musical milieu had not consolidated the notion of a genre which represented the Brazilian identity, until the samba imposed itself as a national product in 1930. Fighting for space in the popular audience, the musical genres sometimes competed for the audience’s taste, many composers aggregated the foreign genres to the repertoire, but others very often operated in opposition to the foreign influences.

To think about the imaginary sounds is precisely a way of recuperating the historical dimension of this process, on the one side, by revealing agents, practices and structures which were activated during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in an effort to make a modern country of Brazil and with its own identity. Like in other nations at that period, the radio played a crucial role in order to create our imaginary community, an illusory union since it aggregated the expression of the mixture of all the differences which constituted us. It is interesting to note that all the sonorities, which still arrive from that time, already existed on the basis of the musical practices of common people (in the sense presented by Hobsbawm), who met and joined in order to make half-bred, hybrid music. In this sense, it is always noticeable to imagine also how these mu-

sical groups, from the jazz bands to the *regional* and the *choro* groups, founded a very particular form of musical expression – because it is also a synthesis of our racial, social and cultural differences.

It is obvious that which we presented here designs a determined configuration in which we can also recognise some research lines which can promote the study of imaginary sounds: a) by means of the historical study of the very constitution of these musical genres in their local formats (as we exposed it here for the case of Curitiba) and its articulations/relations with the forms which would be identified later as Brazil's proper expressions; b) of the role played by the radio as instrument and mediator of these expressions of the local with the national and the foreign, also pointing out a component between identity and memory, in the direction of that which was preserved in the very radios as well as the way in that process of sonorous memory in which different generations of listeners could also recognise and “remember the old times”. The memory of *saudade* [nostalgia], of a time and of other links which were established between all the people and which also made them imagine the country they experienced and in which they wanted to go on living.

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