

## LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

# Undesired Presences: Samba, Improvisation, and Afro-politics in 1970s Brazil

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This article explores the role of the samba subgenre *partido alto* as a mode of resistance to modernization and the Brazilian military regime's disfiguration of samba music in the 1970s. This resistance ultimately led a handful of samba musicians to create the Grêmio Recreativo de Arte Negra Escola de Samba Quilombo in 1975. While it is true that Quilombo nurtured Afro-Brazilian music and culture, the author demonstrates that its leader and cofounder, Antônio Candeia Filho, acted as a samba preservationist and a pioneer, referencing music of the African diaspora, but also as someone who drew the line when it came to espousing Pan-Africanism. The aversion to Pan-Africanism in Rio de Janeiro's samba community heightened in the late 1970s, as Black Soul, among other foreign sounds and cultural presences, was perceived as a threat to the primacy of samba.

Este ensaio estuda o papel do subgênero de samba partido-alto na resistência à modernização e à descaracterização do samba durante o regime militar brasileiro na década de 1970. Tal resistência estimulou um bom número de sambistas a fundar o Grêmio Recreativo de Arte Negra Escola de Samba Quilombo em 1975. Embora o Quilombo tenha alimentado a música e a cultura afro-brasileira, o autor demonstra que seu líder e cofundador, Antônio Candeia Filho, atuou como preservacionista e pioneiro do samba —inspirando-se na música da diáspora africana—, mas também como alguém que estabeleceu limites quando se tratava de desposar o pan-africanismo. A aversão ao pan-africanismo na comunidade do samba no Rio de Janeiro intensificou-se durante o final da década de 1970, quando o Black Soul, entre outros sons estrangeiros e presenças culturais, foi percebido como ameaça à primazia do samba.

## Introduction

The golden age of samba, a time period that spans roughly from the 1920s to the 1940s, primarily refers to the explosion of Rio de Janeiro-based musicians and performers like Donga, Pixinguinha, João da Baiana, Paulo da Portela, Noel Rosa, and Geraldo Pereira, among others. These individuals, along with the intervention of journalists, intellectuals, politicians, entrepreneurs, broadcasters, and fans, helped promote samba as the symbol par excellence of Brazilian national identity in the 1930s. It was only a question of time, though, until *sambistas*<sup>1</sup> would strive for new articulations of community and decolonization. The relentless drive of globalization and crackdown on civil rights, with the enactment of the AI-5<sup>2</sup> in 1968 under the military dictatorship, set the stage for what we might consider the second golden age of samba. From the 1960s well into the late 1980s, samba witnessed the rise of several prominent figures, particularly Zé Keti, Clementina de Jesus, Cartola, Antônio Candeia Filho, Dona Ivone Lara, Martinho da Vila, Paulinho da Viola, Nei Lopes, Roberto Ribeiro, and Bezerra da Silva. Nevertheless, critical studies on the abundant musical production of samba during the military regime continue to be outweighed by research on samba's

<sup>1</sup> To be a sambista presupposes the condition of belonging to the samba world. A sambista can be a singer, a composer, a percussionist, or a dancer whose involvement or recognition is realized by associations or other media. There also exists another category, "samba directors," who are not necessarily artists (Lopes and Simas 2015, 271).

<sup>2</sup> Issued by General Artur da Costa e Silva on December 13, 1968, the Institutional Act Number Five, or AI-5, is regarded as the harshest Institutional Act of the entire Brazilian military dictatorship. The AI-5 gave way to the considerable expansion of presidential powers, the temporary closing of Congress, the suspension of habeas corpus, and further purges (Atencio 2014, 9).

golden age.<sup>3</sup> This is unsettling for many reasons, not the least of which being that samba music and culture experienced unprecedented political obstacles in the 1970s that incited new questions, meditations, and praxes concerning its past, present, and future.

Divided into three sections, this essay first analyzes the impacts of the modernization of samba culture and the military regime on the samba community in Rio de Janeiro. It demonstrates, more concretely, how the need for creativity, improvisation, and freedom in making samba found its voice in *partido alto*.<sup>4</sup> The exploration of *partido alto* was not simply a priority for many sambistas but also a means of survival, fueling the rupture with the Portela samba school and the creation of the Grêmio Recreativo de Arte Negra Escola de Samba Quilombo in 1975.<sup>5</sup> The second section turns to police officer, leader and cofounder of Quilombo, and *partideiro* (practitioner of *partido alto*) Antônio Candeia Filho.<sup>6</sup> It has gone unrecognized for too long that Candeia was a samba preservationist and also a *tropicalista*, a defender of samba's cultural roots, and a pioneer who procured those roots in black music sources as diverse as Brazil, the United States, the Caribbean, and West Africa. Despite this, his awareness of foreign cultural domination in Brazilian society and his unease with (African) American politics made him unsympathetic with Pan-Africanism.<sup>7</sup> The aversion to Pan-Africanism becomes especially apparent in the third section, where I explore Black Soul in the late 1970s and its reception in Rio's samba community. As Black Soul triggered debates on Brazilian racial and cultural politics, sambistas such as Candeia, Elton Medeiros, Clementina de Jesus, and Dona Ivone Lara, among others, regarded Black Soul as a threat to the primacy of samba music and culture.

### Improvisation Above All Else: Partido Alto as Method

The largest slave colony and the last to abolish slavery in the New World (in 1888), Brazil imported over 5.6 million Africans from the sixteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century. This estimate excludes Africans who died on slave ships (Faria 2002, 237). At present, Brazil's black population is second only to that of Nigeria. Since the enslavement of Africans in the New World, dark skin and black culture have signified undesirability and inferiority. The undervaluing of Afro-Brazilians and their culture shifted in the early twentieth century as the scientific and artistic sectors of Brazil reevaluated the potential Afro-Brazilian contributions to the enterprise of nation building. The cultural nationalism of Brazilian *modernismo* in the 1920s, and the rapid development of commercial radio and the record industry, the rise of author's rights associations, and the growing popularity of samba in the 1930s, are some of the factors that conspired to make that musical genre the ultimate synthesis of national identity.<sup>8</sup> From then on, Brazil would portray itself as a land composed not of whites, blacks, and indigenous peoples but of *mestiços*.<sup>9</sup> Samba would be evidence to the rest of the world of Brazil's "racial democracy." Operating as a racial ideal among the

<sup>3</sup> In recent years, contributions to the critical literature on samba, such as Sandroni (2001), McCann (2004), and Hertzman (2013) canvass topics that range from the dispute of samba as a genre to authors' rights and the centrality of radio in nation building. None of these projects, however, analyze samba during the period of the military regime, when it came to dislodge its national symbolic order in contemplation of new musical, racial, and political reconfigurations.

<sup>4</sup> As an improvisational variant of samba, *partido alto* has multiple forms of versification: of the two fundamental types, the old or Bahian and the modern Carioca, little is known about how the latter was practiced by the children of Bahians in Rio de Janeiro in the beginning of the twentieth century (Sandroni 2001, 104).

<sup>5</sup> From now on I will refer to it as "Quilombo."

<sup>6</sup> Born in Oswaldo Cruz, Rio de Janeiro, on August 17, 1935, Candeia was raised in a musical environment. His father, a typographer and flutist, was a member of the Portela samba school. In 1965, some twelve years after Candeia composed his first *samba-enredo* for Portela, he would experience an event that would radically alter the course of his life. In a heated traffic dispute, an Italian motorist brandished a gun and shot Candeia five times, leaving him paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair. In the eyes of journalist Arthur Poerner, this tragedy motivated Candeia to cultivate a more critical position on Afro-Brazilian culture and to denounce the systemic distortions that were affecting samba schools, most notably, Portela (Simas 2012, 89). According to Nei Lopes, career opportunities were scarce for Afro-Brazilians in the 1970s. Working as a police officer was seen by many sambistas as a secure paycheck that would afford them respect and status in their group. Martinho da Vila, conversely, opines that there were other job prospects for Candeia, as there were for other sambistas, but he chose to become a police officer by conviction. Not all, but many sambistas, even friends of his, remember Candeia as a police officer who intimidated them on occasion or made arrests, as was the case of Dominginhos do Estácio (Lopes and da Vila cited in Vargens 2008, 44–46).

<sup>7</sup> Pan-Africanism can be summarized as a pan-humanism that opposes all forms of inequality. It is not a religion, an ideology, or a philosophy, but rather a way of life, a calling to higher awareness for humanity that advocates the transcendence of geopolitical boundaries. In its more refined political strain, Pan-Africanism emphasizes the emancipation, interactions, and awareness of black people in the distribution of power and the recognition of their identity worldwide (Kinni 2015, 27).

<sup>8</sup> For a wide range of interpretations on samba, race, and nation building, see Candeia Filho and Araújo (1978), Raphael (1980), Lopes (1981), McCann (2004), Vianna (2008), Bocskay (2012), Aragão (2013), Hertzman (2013), and Spirito Santo (2016).

<sup>9</sup> Taken here as a cognitive category widely inherited from the history of colonization, *mestiços* are to be understood not merely as biological phenomenon among different populations, but as sociopolitical discourse that stems from this biological phenomenon inherent to the evolutionary history of humanity (Munanga 1999, 18, 21).

Brazilian elite since at least 1920, and introduced as a concept by Gilberto Freyre in his classic 1933 oeuvre *Casa-grande & senzala* (*The Masters and the Slaves*) in response to racist interpretations by Oliveira Vianna and others, the ideology of “racial democracy” advances the fallacious view that Brazil is free of racial prejudice and discrimination, and that consequently, blacks and whites are afforded equal social and economic opportunities (Hasenbalg 1979, 242; Skidmore 1985, 13).

Ever since the early twentieth century, samba music and culture have encompassed spaces through which musicians could express their sociopolitical desires and frustrations. According to leading scholar of media and Afro-Brazilian culture Muniz Sodré, sambistas are black politicians insofar as they embody a collective movement or political action that intends to affirm a social group from “below,” and not from the state, or “above,” as Realpolitik.<sup>10</sup> By political, I am referring specifically to Jacques Rancière’s concept of the “distribution of the sensible,” the notion that one’s occupation determines the ability or inability to take charge of what is common to the community, what is seen and what can be said, who has the ability to see and the talent to speak, around the properties of space and the possibilities of time (Rancière 2004, 12–13). The political citizen, therefore, is the one whose occupation is not waiting elsewhere but is predicated on free movement in the city, like that of the sambista.

If it is true that sambistas are black politicians, what kind of politics have they envisioned? How might their politics have shaped or contested local, national, and global imaginaries of music, race, and community in Brazil? Why is samba music and culture in the 1970s so significant in this regard? After conducting extensive research, I agree with Nei Lopes and Sérgio Cabral that Afro-Brazilian militancy in samba lyrics and cultural politics took force in the 1970s with Antônio Candeia Filho, Nei Lopes, Luiz Carlos da Vila, Martinho da Vila, and, to a lesser degree, Paulinho da Viola.<sup>11</sup> Candeia’s partido alto “Dia de Graça” (1970) is key, for it signals the first explicit call to Afro-Brazilian militancy in samba lyrics.

In “Dia de Graça” (Day of Grace) (1970), the lyrical voice refers to Afro-Brazilians as “blacks” and interprets Rio’s carnival as an “illusion” after which they will return to their shacks.<sup>12</sup> For this reason, the lyrical voice demands that blacks not deny race as a determining socioeconomic factor in Brazilian society. To ameliorate their lives, blacks must “wake up” and face the racial segregation outside of carnival.<sup>13</sup> Blacks, following the lyrical voice, should be “kings” not just in carnival but also in society. The verse “sing a samba in the university” is an allusion to the importance of allowing younger generations of blacks to study in the universities and break the cycle of social, economic, and racial segregation.<sup>14</sup> Throughout the 1970s, black discourses within Rio’s samba community were compounded of several variables, ranging from the modernization of samba music to the perceived threat of national and foreign music and cultural politics. A valuable point of entry into these issues can be found in the Renascença Clube.

<sup>10</sup> Muniz Sodré, interview by author, Rio de Janeiro, May 25, 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Sérgio Cabral, interview by author, Rio de Janeiro, July 13, 2010; Nei Lopes, interview by author, August 18, 2010. Expert in samba’s history, Nei Lopes affirms that “during a long time, racial questions were only present in samba lyrics through racist messages or photographing prejudice” (August 18, 2010). Similarly, and not an exceptional case at the time, Bryan McCann notes that the *favelado* (favela resident) in Geraldo Pereira’s “Cabritada Malsucedida” (Unfortunate Goat Stew) (1953) is Afro-Brazilian by implication (2004, 85). Both Lopes’s and McCann’s observations echo Júlio César Farias’s, who stresses that Afro-Brazilian themes in Rio’s carnival expanded only after 1960, when the samba school Salgueiro began to exalt blacks (Farias 2007, 79). Even in Afro-Brazilian poetry, Jane Malinoff McDivitt outlines a progression from “anguish” in the eighteenth century to “affirmation” in the late 1970s (1980, 6).

<sup>12</sup> For complete lyrics, see Candeia Filho (1970). In addition to “Afro-Brazilian” I also use “Afro-descendant” and “black” as roughly interchangeable terms.

<sup>13</sup> Aníbal Machado’s 1931 short story entitled, “A Morte da Porta-Estandarte” (The Death of the Flagbearer) is a fine example of racial tensions during Rio’s carnival in the famous Praça Onze. While there is no explicit call for Afro-Brazilians to “wake up” as evidenced in “Dia de Graça,” the narrator oscillates between racialized and euphemistic language, contrasting “o preto” (the black man) with “os felizes” (the happy ones) (1971, 41).

<sup>14</sup> On the evening of Good Friday, 1968, Eduardo Galeano made a request to his Brazilian friend, musician Arthur Poerner. Galeano, who was gathering materials for what would become a classic, *Open Veins of Latin America*, asked Poerner to take him to the *terreiro* of quimbanda Nossa Senhora da Conceição, located at the Morro de Sossogo in the neighborhood of Jardim Botânico, Rio de Janeiro. Inspired by the old black man Vovô Catirino and the spirit of anarchic protest that he encountered during several visits to the *terreiro*, Poerner created the poem “O Morro do Sossogo” (Peace and Quiet Hill). The poem collected dust in a drawer for two years until Candeia, a rising sambista, befriended Poerner. Upon reading the poem, Candeia identified with its critique of social and racial oppression, and decided to put it to music with Poerner. Like so, Candeia finished composing “O Morro do Sossogo” on the evening of Poerner’s release from prison, just before his political exile to Germany. From poem to samba-calangueado, Candeia recorded “O Morro do Sossogo” on cassette tape in 1970 and sang it repeatedly in musical gatherings, but it was only recorded in 1988 by Cristina Buarque as a homage to Candeia ten years after his passing. Before then, on May 26, 1971, the Brazilian military government censored “O Morro do Sossogo.” The final verse, “man doesn’t consume man,” was interpreted by the censors as an attempt to “encourage class struggle.” For more information, see Galeano (2011) and Filgueiras (2017).

Established in Lins de Vasconcelos, Rio de Janeiro, on February 17, 1951, the Renascença Clube or “Rena” was conceived as a social, recreational, sportive, and cultural space that served to promote solidarity among members and families. The Renascença opened its doors in response to black segregation that Afro-Brazilians experienced while trying to attend clubs in Rio de Janeiro. In the early 1970s, the new directors of Renascença would redefine their political vision by rejecting the elitism and moralism of the club in the 1950s—and the samba project of the 1960s—that situated blacks, and especially black women, in a position of subordination and manipulation. The new group of directors in the 1970s became indignant with how samba and samba culture sidestepped racial questions and encouraged middle-class whites to fetishize Afro-Brazilian women.

Inspired by the film and television series *Shaft*, Renascença’s “Shaft Night,” which began in 1972, united the inhabitants of Rio’s low-income black communities to bolster their self-esteem and identity by celebrating black pride to the sounds of soul music and African American cultural expression. In lieu of extolling their *brasilidade* (Brazilianness), attendants forged transnational identifications of black diaspora with the United States, recreating ways of being black and Brazilian. In interviews with Shaft Night attendees, Sonia Maria Giacomini illustrates the wave of insensitivity and reductionism mounted against them; detractors reproached them as imitators of US music while exposing general Brazilian insecurities such as, “Why doesn’t Shaft play Brazilian music?” For these reasons, founders and Shaft attendees concurred that samba and samba culture were conformist and reinforced the racist status quo (Giacomini 2006, 216).

Around this time, several sambistas responded to the *descaracterização* (disfiguration) of samba music.<sup>15</sup> During perhaps Brazil’s most memorable World Cup event in history, in 1970, General Emílio Garrastazu Médici turned his attention to soccer and samba as the prime movers of nationalist euphoria. In 1970, there appeared a more political samba that “linked the old familiar rhythms with themes directly inspired by a regime eager to blend samba melodies and football triumphs in a vigorous campaign for popular support” (Flynn 1971, 327). While it is true that popular music identified as critical of the military regime or at odds with its values was subject to censorship, Paulo Cesar de Araújo (2003) and Gustavo Alonso (2011) demonstrate, contrary to other scholarship, that many artists also, sang, supported, and desired the glories of the dictatorship.<sup>16</sup> A catchy *marcha*, Miguel Gustavo’s “Pra Frente Brasil” (Forward Brazil) was adopted as virtually the theme song of the dictatorship.<sup>17</sup> Played by army bands at presidential reviews and official occasions, and repeated on radio and television, “Pra Frente Brasil” was ubiquitous. After 1970, coincidentally, the “legitimate” samba-enredo—a type of samba composition associated with carnival—experienced profound and undesirable transformations due to “the measured time of the processions and the excessive number of participants. The sambas-enredo of the present have a very accelerated tempo, easy rhymes and lyrics” (Elias 2005, 208). In the midst of this, however, lurked a more organic, long-standing, and free-spirited protagonist who would confront the overarching ideology that framed samba’s new velocity: partido alto.

Narrated by the soothing voice of Paulinho da Viola, Leon Hirszman’s 1976 documentary *Partido alto*, which was released in 1982, provides indispensable counternarratives to the accelerated and chronometrically rigid styles of samba previously mentioned.<sup>18</sup> Highlighted by many scholars (Carneiro 1961; Lopes 1992; Sodré 1998; Sandroni 2001; Hertzman 2013; Lopes and Simas 2015), partido alto is often emphasized as the “traditional” or “authentic” samba.<sup>19</sup> For Candeia, Manacéia, and da Viola, among other sambistas, partido alto encapsulated various forms of musical expression, language, and identity that were local and intimate.

<sup>15</sup> All translations from original Portuguese sources are mine. The Portuguese word *descaracterização* resists a smooth translation into English. I opted for the English word *disfiguration* because, as we will see throughout this essay, it captures the negative aspects of modernization and government intervention in samba music and culture.

<sup>16</sup> Some scholars who overemphasize the “resistance paradigm” are Waldenyr Caldas (1977), Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda and Marcos A. Gonçalves (1982), Alberto Moby (1994), and Marc Hertzman (2013). Anterior research of Carlos Fico (2002) and Gustavo Alonso (2011) and my interviews with Beth Carvalho (Rio de Janeiro, June 29, 2016), Paulinho da Viola (Rio de Janeiro, July 27, 2016), and Martinho da Vila (Rio de Janeiro, July 19, 2016), among others, also invalidate the claim that “under the administration of Ernesto Geisel (1974–1979), the military altered its approach to music and focused less on censorship” (Hertzman 2013, 227–228).

<sup>17</sup> *Marcha* tends to be a merry, popular music for dancing, which originated in the sacred and profane processions known as *cordões* and *ranchos carnavalescos*. In some cases, however, it embodies a melancholic tone due to its influence from *pastorinhas*, another type of vocal procession led by women (Houaiss and Salles Villar 2001, 1850).

<sup>18</sup> Another informative documentary is Carlos Tourinho and Clovis Scarpino’s *Partideiros* (Embrafilme, 1978).

<sup>19</sup> After the 1920s, people migrated from Minas Gerais, the old state of Rio, and São Paulo’s coffee region in search of employment as cargo workers and stevedores, among other trades in Rio de Janeiro’s Cais do Porto. Once settled, these migrant laborers, along with the vibrant Bahian community, cultivated the rural Bahian samba and southeastern *calango*, which became some of the principal ingredients of partido alto. Other factors added to the “authenticity” or “traditional” characteristics of partido alto, namely, the distinguished clothing and elegance of the “baianas do partido alto” (Bahian women of partido alto). The “call and response” between soloists and chorus in partido alto is also typical of percussive songs of western Bantus and common to music of African origin in the Americas (Lopes and Simas 2015, 211–214).

In *Partido alto*, Candeia remarks on how the variants of partido alto displayed in the samba school Portela were on the brink of extinction. Typically, the *cavaquinho*, a small, four-stringed guitar resembling a ukulele, would stand alone, and more instruments would gradually adhere to the spirit of the work being crafted. The sounds of the *cavaquinho*, household dishes, and the absence of a chorus, constituted the ballast of the *roda de samba*.<sup>20</sup> Affiliates of the Portela samba school also had a unique way of dancing partido alto, whose trademark was the placing of hands on hips.

Improvisation, a hallmark of *brasilidade*, mounted concerns for partideiros as they could not help but notice the mix of indifference and difficulty that it posed for sambistas at large. For some Brazilians, improvisation has epitomized the nation's ills such as underdevelopment, impunity, and social inequality, while for others it holds the promise of a new stage of humanity in a globalized world (Stanyek 2011, 5). To Paulinho da Viola, the *roda* of partido alto represented a moment of liberty and of improvised verses; a mode of resistance to the compromises and reduction of creativity in samba enforced by the limits of carnival (Hirszman 1982). Recorded in 1975 on the album *Paulinho da Viola*, Da Viola's samba "Argumento" (Argument) condemns the disfiguration of samba: "That's fine, I accept the argument/But don't alter my samba like that" (Da Viola 1975).

A number of sambistas became indignant with the rapid modernization of samba schools, and above all, Portela. On March 11, 1975, with the support of Carlos Monte, Paulinho da Viola, Claudio Pinheiro, and André Motta Lima, Candeia submitted a letter to Portela's president Carlinhos Maracanã that critiqued the school and offered a list of suggestions to overcome its obstacles. As their concerns fell on the deaf ears of Portela's administration, the group left Portela to form the Grêmio Recreativo de Arte Negra Escola de Samba Quilombo (Simas 2012, 89–91). Erected in late 1975, Quilombo styled itself as a movement of resistance against the disfiguration of samba's cultural roots (see **Figures 1** and **2**). The balance between samba preservation and evolution, however, had been addressed as early as 1962 by an array of music composers, interpreters, sambistas, researchers, and enthusiasts at the Primeiro Congresso Nacional do Samba (First National Congress of Samba), held at the Palácio Pedro Ernesto in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>21</sup> Coauthor of samba classics like "Peito Vazio," "Madrugada," and "Onde a Dor Não Tem Razão," legendary sambista Elton Medeiros decried the conversion of Rio's samba schools into a "bolsa de valores" (stock exchange).<sup>22</sup> Beginning in the 1960s, observes Medeiros, the board of directors of samba schools passed to the hands of rich businessmen who had no love or belief in samba (*Correio Braziliense* 1977, 12). One of Quilombo's counterstrategies to the spectacle of carnival dominated by high-paying white tourists was to eschew funding from the tourist agency in favor of a low-budget, participatory spectacle that exhibited Quilombo's own principles (Raphael 1980, 125, 160; McCann 2002, 45). Some of those principles were providing free food and entry to their headquarters, projecting films on black culture, offering varied musical styles like partido alto and *caxambu*,<sup>23</sup> playing the card game *sueca*, and having conversations and telling stories.<sup>24</sup>

While I do not propose to name all contributors, suffice it to say Quilombo counted on a wide network of musicians, many from the Portela samba school (Paulinho da Viola, Casquinha, Waldir 59, Elton Medeiros, Jorge Coutinho, Nei Lopes, Martinho da Vila, Clara Nunes), journalists (Waldinar Ranulpho, Clovis Scarpino, Juarez Barroso, Lena Frias), and organizations such as the Instituto de Pesquisa das Culturas Negras (IPCN, or the Research Institute of Black Cultures) and the Centro de Estudos Afro-Asiáticos (CEAA, or the Center of Afro-Asian Studies).

In an interview published in the newspaper *Última Hora* in January 1976, Candeia elaborates on Quilombo's racial tolerance and decodes the meanings of disfiguration in samba schools: "The resistance is mainly against the disfiguration of samba schools. From now on, we want to ensure that people will

<sup>20</sup> A *roda de samba* is a musical gathering, often in a circle, in which samba aficionados sing, play instruments, and dance.

<sup>21</sup> For more information on specific concerns, read Carneiro (1962).

<sup>22</sup> Born in Gloria, Rio de Janeiro, in 1930, Elton Medeiros was one of seven children in a blue-collar family. As a composer, singer, and rhythm player, Medeiros has collaborated with highly respected samba musicians such as Cartola, Zé Ketil, and most notably, Paulinho da Viola. In 1965, Medeiros gained visibility beside samba legend Clementina de Jesus in the show "Rosa de Ouro."

<sup>23</sup> *Caxambu* is one of the regional names of *jongo*, an Afro-Brazilian dance that is practiced in a circle by unpaired men and women to the sounds of drums and *chocalhos*. *Caxambu* also refers to a drum with the same name that is used in *jongo* (Lopes 2011, 186, 375, 662).

<sup>24</sup> For in-depth analysis on Candeia and Quilombo, see *Correio Braziliense* (1977), Candeia Filho and Araújo (1978), Lopes (1981), Vargens (2008), and Simas (2012). Historically speaking, *quilombos* refer to the settlements of runaway slaves in Brazil. *Quilombo* was also the name of a world-class weekly produced by the Teatro Experimental do Negro (TEN, or Black Experimental Theatre) from 1948 to 1950. Directed by Abdias do Nascimento, *Quilombo* was built on the participation of highly acclaimed white and black national and international collaborators who sought to launch an original project of resistance against racism in Brazil (Nascimento 2003, 11).



**Figure 1:** Antônio Candeia Filho. Source: Funarte.



**Figure 2:** Martinho da Vila and Candeia at the release of the LP “Tendinha” in 1978. Source: ZFM.

continue to know what a samba school was and what sambistas were, how and why sambistas got together, sang, danced, and used their own traditional rhythm. What we will rebuff are blacks and whites who intend to ‘innovate’ samba, thereby soiling its character and removing it from its cultural roots. Our objective is to protect the essence of the origins of our samba” (Vargens 2008, 74–75).<sup>25</sup>

Here, Candeia’s reflections overlap with those of others on *partido alto* and its importance as a pedagogical treatise of samba’s cultural roots, as seen in Hirszman’s *Partido alto* (1982). Coauthored with Isnard Araújo, *Escola de samba: Árvore que esqueceu a raiz* (Samba School: Tree That Forgot the Root) (1978) exposes Candeia’s and Araújo’s sociological perspectives on power structures, samba culture and schools, and racial hierarchies in Brazilian society. Perhaps most intriguing is how the authors entangle themselves in a thorny push-pull dynamic. On the one hand, they critique the monopoly of white Brazilians in politics, economics, educational privileges, and well-being; on the other, they acquit the middle class from contributing to the disfiguration of samba schools. For Candeia and Araújo, samba is of the “Brazilian nation,”

<sup>25</sup> Humorist and cofounder of the weekly satirical newspaper *O Pasquim*, Sérgio Jaguaribe (“Jaguar”) condemned famous Brazilian musicians and music critics for their exploitative and opportunistic behavior: “Many people contend that they are somehow linked to Quilombo, but the truth is that they only appear on the day that television films the samba school procession in the city’s center. Maria Bethânia and a handful of artists and celebrities have no clue where the headquarters of the school are located. I also have never seen music critics there before” (*O Pasquim* 1981, 12). For similar critiques on the relationship between capital, samba consumption, and the middle class, see Lopes (1981).

its schools of “natural” and “spontaneous” development, and its problems of “economic and social order” (Candeia and Araújo 1978, 83, 90). In this way, Candeia and Araújo refrain from a thorough discussion on the institutional and societal causes and consequences of the evolution of samba schools as characteristic of Brazilian race relations discourses. As previously noted and detailed in the following analysis, Candeia was reluctant to see the struggles of Afro-Brazilians mirrored in those of Afro-descendants worldwide in musical genres like soul, rumba, and reggae. His mission was to ensure the survival of Brazil’s “national music”: samba.

### **Antônio Candeia Filho: Preservationist and *Tropicalista***

Foreign music was not exactly Candeia’s nemesis. On one occasion, his son Jairo recalled how his father listened to a more “elite” strain of American music like Nat King Cole. Elton John was also one of his favorites. “When I came home one day he was singing ‘Rocket Man,’” recounts Jairo (Watzl 2010). Candeia did not just enjoy listening to foreign music, he reinvented samba with a tropicalist approach that is evident in his embrace of African, US, Caribbean, and Brazilian musical influences.<sup>26</sup> As Bernardo Oliveira (2015) argues, Candeia’s act of resistance manifested itself in his defensive act of preservation, not in the positive act of creation.

Despite signs of Candeia’s adoption of foreign music in the early 1970s, he came to assail young Brazilians’ identification with it and took aim at the Brazilian media for prioritizing foreign cultural products over Brazilian ones. Lamenting the “lack of options” or “opportunities for choice,” he avowed, “We are inclined to do what consumer marketing imposes on us” (Bacellar, Couto, and Rocha 2008). Perhaps even more emphatically, Quilombo cofounder Elton Medeiros asked, “How can we remain with our arms crossed when 80 percent of the music on the radio is foreign?” (*Correio Braziliense* 1977, 13). In *Que horas são? Ensaios* (1989), Roberto Schwarz argues that progress and social prestige in Latin America hinge on a perceived superiority and deification of the cultural products of First World nations. A proud and ebullient Afro-Brazilian musician, Candeia was allergic to this psychological current, and made it clear whenever afforded the opportunity to do so.

The political complexity embedded in what has proven to be a largely uneven transnational musical exchange between the United States and Brazil dates back to the early twentieth century.<sup>27</sup> Upon their return from Paris in 1922, the acclaimed music composer and *choro* bandleader Pixinguinha and his group, the Oito Batutas, were sneered at for being “corrupted” by the influence of American jazz and using instruments such as saxophone and trumpet. The *bossa novistas* also harbored their own qualms. Carlos Lyra’s “Influência do Jazz” (Influence of Jazz) (1963) speaks to the slavish emulation of jazz and its incorporation to Brazilian musical styles. Not exclusively characteristic of the political climate during João Goulart’s presidency from 1961 to 1964, Lyra, like many left- and right-wing nationalists, sought the “residual,” which upon subtraction, would render the “authentic substance” of Brazil (Schwarz 1989, 33).

This theoretical credo rang true on July 17, 1967, when approximately four hundred demonstrators, among them musicians such as Elis Regina, Gilberto Gil, Geraldo Vandré, Jair Rodrigues, Edu Lobo, and Zé Keti, marched from the Largo São Francisco to the Teatro Paramount on Avenida Brigadeiro Luís Antônio in São Paulo, protesting the electric guitar with the slogan “Abaixo a guitarra!” (Down with the guitar!). For some, the electric guitar symbolized the invasion of “Yankee imperialism”; for others, it typified the overbearing presence of commercial—usually meaning distasteful—US music in Brazil. Positions on the issue were dissonant and in some cases, as time would tell, regrettable. Whereas Caetano Veloso and Nara Leão were against the march, musicians like Gilberto Gil—who did not consider himself “an ideological defender of territories”—saw it as a “healthy dispute of people with different visions.” Researcher of Brazilian popular music Sérgio Cabral, in contrast, admitted publically decades later that the march against the electric guitar was “ridiculous” (Terra and Calil 2010).

<sup>26</sup> The suggestively ironic title of Candeia’s 1971 LP *Raiz* (Root), exemplifies this complexity. The trumpets in the composition “Saudação a Toco Preto” (Salute to Toco Preto) evoke Afrobeat; the striking on the clave, Afro-Cuba; and the fluttering Hammond organ, US soul music. Likewise, the song “Imaginação” (Imagination) echoes US soul music and early Tim Maia. “Quarto Escuro” (Dark Room) also dialogues overtly with Brazilian and foreign musical genres. Brazilian musician Guinga, a close friend of Candeia, emphasizes that Candeia’s musical universe “cannot be simplified” and also recalls that he was “crazy about” Dave Brubeck’s “Take Five” (Oliveira 2015).

<sup>27</sup> In the mid-1910s, *maxixe*, a mid-nineteenth-century modern, international, and urban Brazilian dance, had a brief but notable stint in the United States. At the height of US imperialism and anti-black racism, writes Micol Seigel, “Promoters helped fold maxixe into the culture of empire’s benign exoticisms, related to African American forms closely enough to be titillating and at enough distance to be safe” (2009, 72).

Candeia, among others, was not immune to the disfiguration of samba, the growing popularity of US soul music, nor the Brazilian media's "overvaluing" of foreign cultural products.<sup>28</sup> In fact, his lack of enthusiasm with Pan-Africanism can hardly be imagined free of these considerations. When asked whether Afro-Brazilians who adopt foreign musical models are seeking racial identification and unity, Candeia discarded the possibility, deeming Brazil's problems unique. In Candeia's view, the curative recipe for Brazilians would be "to encounter solutions within our own principles, within our own culture, within our *modus vivendi*, and not to imitate or import things that come from other countries" (Bacellar, Couto, and Rocha 2008).

As US soul music had already achieved local coinage and expression as "Black Rio" in Brazil, in May 1977, Candeia and writer Cecília Jucá exhibited critical diasporic commentary on Brazil, the United States, and Africa in an interview with the magazine *José: Literatura, crítica & arte*:

Candeia: I do not intend to imitate anything that is related to American blacks which does not interest me. I return to African culture, the mother culture. As such, African culture suffered a process of violence. I consider black Brazilians to be the greatest cultural heirs of Africa. American blacks are completely left out; they suffered a total brainwashing, and because of this, are no longer connected to their origins.

Cecília Jucá: [American blacks] contributed very little to the diverse forms of cultural expression. Not in music, but in other forms of expression like the culinary arts, there was no miscegenation in American society (Candeia Filho 1977a, 4).

Candeia and Jucá manifest a commonly misguided understanding of US history that considers American blacks to be stripped of their origins. They also deny the United States' membership into the miscegenation club.<sup>29</sup> Certainly not alone, Brazilian anthropologist Antônio Risério contends dogmatically that in the United States, "African cultures were destroyed, swept off the map" (2009, 116). Risério cautions social scientists not to transfer the United States' historical reality to Brazil; yet, ultimately, he performs the same operation, albeit inversely. The United States would forfeit its Africanness only if one were to subject it to Risério's categorizations of what he considers African origins to be. To Risério, African origins are nonexistent in the United States because there are no *orixás*, practices and symbolic systems of African origin, and there are too many blacks spending time "hugging the Bible" (2009, 116).

Writers and activists of Afro-Brazilian culture Abdias do Nascimento and Elisa Larkin Nascimento challenge the much-touted idea of religious "syncretism" in Brazil. For them, African religion in Brazil has been thwarted by constant institutional surveillance and white co-optation (1992, 155). Furthermore, to argue retrospectively that white landowners and Protestantism hindered religious syncretism in the United States more than in Brazil neglects that Africanness is a process of designification and resignification. Keeping this in mind, in spite of the United States' policy limitations in Africa, the country has provided a focus of interest for contemporary Africa that has no counterpart in contemporary Brazil (Dzidzienyo 1985). It is also critical to notice how Jucá's, Candeia's, and Risério's position silences the extensive historical debates regarding the *branqueamento* (whitening) of Afro-Brazilians.<sup>30</sup> These points are reminiscent of the Shaft attendees' observations in the early 1970s that labeled samba and samba culture as conformist and preservationist of the racist status quo for denouncing transnational identification among Afro-descendants. As we shall witness in the ensuing section, Black Soul would disrupt, albeit temporarily, the logic of Brazilian exceptionalism and the primacy of samba in Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>28</sup> While Paulinho da Viola genuinely enjoyed pivotal albums like Ella Fitzgerald's "Ink Spots," he felt embittered by the growing Brazilian preference for new musical genres over the well-established ones like choro and samba. As da Viola reminisced about his father, César Faria, and Jacob do Bandolim playing together, he asks in disbelief, "How are people going to abandon *this*?" (Da Viola 2014).

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Skidmore reminds us that "no slave population in the Americas failed to produce a large mulatto population. It was not the fact of miscegenation but the recognition or non-recognition of the mixed bloods as a separate group that made the difference" (1993, 70). In the United States, for example, the white/black racial binary eclipsed the mulatto category around 1930. The disuse of the mulatto category in the United States has left many with the impression that there is no racial miscegenation there. Hermano Vianna (2008, 158) seems to be unaware of critical race studies in the United States, as he espouses the notion that Brazilians would be the precursors of a North American militancy that today aspires to create a multiracial census in the United States. Similar to Vianna, Demétrio Magnoli (2005) also possesses a skewed perspective on US racial history.

<sup>30</sup> The theory of "whitening" came to be accepted by most of the Brazilian elite from 1889 to 1914, and was based on the assumption of white superiority, and that through time, miscegenation could forge a healthy mixed population growing steadily whiter, both culturally and physically, resulting in the disappearance of blacks and their gradual absorption into the white race (Skidmore 1993, 65, 68). Also see Dávila (2003).

## Racial Comparison and Musical Competition: The Case of Black Soul

In the late 1970s, the US-inspired cultural movement dubbed Black Soul or Black Rio erected transnational semiotic codes among Brazilians, and most notably, Afro-descendants.<sup>31</sup> Cultural products of black protest and empowerment circulated to varying degrees in literature with Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of The Earth* (1961), Stokely Carmichael's *Black Power* (1967), and Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice* (1968); in film and documentaries with the starring roles of football player and actor Jim Brown, and Mel Stuart's *Wattstax* (1973); and in music with the celebration of black power anthems like James Brown's "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud" (1968).<sup>32</sup> The surge of black empowerment in the north blossomed on Brazilian soil, propagating verbalizations of US and Brazilian cultural and racial politics. Lena Frias's 1976 article "Black Rio: The (Imported) Pride of Being Black in Brazil" set the tone of how the racial imaginary encoded in soul styles threatened venerated images and narratives of Brazilian national identity.

In hopes of reinstating the ideology of racial democracy, the Brazilian military criticized Black Soul while garnering support by wealthier civilians who opposed the dictatorship yet believed that the fans of Black Soul were espousing racial hatred and conflict. Black Soul also caused alarm due to independence from and resistance to white elite definitions of national "Brazilianness" and Afro-Brazilian cultural practice (Hanchard 1994, 114). For the director of WEA Discos Ltda. André Midani and the leader of the Soul Grand Prix dance party, Asfilófilo de Oliveira Filho ("Dom Filó"), it was inadmissible that white people in the more affluent Zona Sul of Rio could wear jeans, bop to rock, and idolize Mick Jagger, while blacks in the more destitute Zona Norte could not sport zappy clothes, groove to soul, and idolize James Brown. In Filó's view, as in others', blacks were expected to remain in the morros (hillside shantytowns) so as to bar an "eventual competition in the job market" (*Veja* 1976, 158).<sup>33</sup> As a reformed branch of Brazil's long-existing secret or "political" police, which had investigated black organizations like the Frente Negra (Black Front) in the early 1930s and the TEN in the 1940s and 1950s, the Departamento Geral de Investigações Especiais (DGIE, General Department of Special Investigations) political intelligence wing carried out investigations into the soul phenomenon as early as April 1975 (Alberto 2009, 8).

Other African diasporic musical genres like reggae, for example, garnered a warmer reception in Brazil than Black Soul. When Bob Marley paid a visit to Rio de Janeiro in 1980, he declared, "samba and reggae are the same thing, they have the same feeling of African roots" (Pinho 2001, 195). Marley's parallelism between samba and reggae is, to say the least, intriguing. In my analysis, there are at least three reasons why reggae did not engender national discomfort in Brazil from the 1970s on: albeit an "offspring" of soul, reggae music represented, at the time, the small Caribbean island of Jamaica and not US empire; the political imaginary of famed reggae artists like Bob Marley and Jimmy Cliff was not as overtly racially charged as soul; and, unlike in Salvador and São Luís where reggae music gained traction in the 1970s, reggae only began to catch on in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Southern Brazil in the 1980s, after Candeia's death in 1978 and Black Soul's waning popularity.<sup>34</sup>

The divergent tonalities in the reception of reggae and soul in Brazil lend some credibility to Gerard Béhague's claim that there can hardly be such a thing as a unified African diaspora given the ethnohistorical differentiation of the Afro-American communities in the Western Hemisphere (2002, 9). As we will continue to witness, though, the variable of differentiation is not simply an ethnohistorical question: Rio's black population in the 1970s constituted ideological positions that ranged from the distaste of Afro-diasporic cultures to their celebration, thereby deflating the fantasy of a coherent local or national black community.

In 1977, the legendary anthropologist Gilberto Freyre warned Brazilians in an article published in the *Diário de Pernambuco* entitled "Attention Brazilians" that Brazil should not let itself fall prey to the "militant Marxism of hatred" of the jealous United States, for Brazil is a "fraternally brown nation" where "sambas are

<sup>31</sup> Researchers coined these terms. Dance organizers and attendees, on the other hand, used other terminologies such as *bailes soul* (soul dances) and *bailes black* (black dances) (Carlos Alberto Medeiros, interview by author, February 29, 2016). Brazilian writer, producer, and cultural journalist Ana Maria Bahiana considers Black Rio more a culture and itinerant community than a "movement" per se (Peixoto and Sebadelhe 2016, 228).

<sup>32</sup> Documentaries like *Wattstax* and audiovisual media, in general, were more accessible to Afro-Brazilians than foreign literary texts (Carlos Alberto Medeiros, interview by author, February 29, 2016). For more information on the circulation of African American cultural products in Rio's soul dances, see Alberto (2009; 2011).

<sup>33</sup> Another recommended resource is Vianna (1997).

<sup>34</sup> A rich source on reggae in Brazil can be found in Kavin Dayanandan Paulraj (2013).

almost all happy and fraternal.”<sup>35</sup> In his conservative status quo idealizations, Freyre conjectured that “there is no ‘Black Brazilian’ separate from the national Brazilian community. There exist Brazilians of Black-African origin, some of which suffer discrimination, not of a racial character, but of class” (Hanchard 1994, 115, 127). As Muniz Sodré correctly points out, when Freyre speaks of Brazilian culture, he establishes a hierarchy in which the Iberian elements stand out above the African and indigenous ones (1988, 163).<sup>36</sup> Freyre assumes the classical Brazilian position that is shared by many contemporary intellectuals, which stipulates that racial discrimination is not a Brazilian problem but a foreign one.<sup>37</sup> For thinkers like Freyre, Brazilian identity is national and unified and intolerant of ethnic discourses. This disposition forgoes the inclusion of Afro-Brazilian voices in the construction of racial categories and discourses in both public and institutional spaces. It is reasonable to consider that—like many intellectuals throughout post-abolitionist societies in the Americas—Freyre might have been fearful that as Afro-Brazilians became politically empowered, they would “revolt” or gain control over their representation and objectives.<sup>38</sup>

The transition from historical object to subject seemed increasingly viable for many Afro-Brazilians at the time. In the latter half of the 1970s, the IPCN realized connections with the soul dances that had become popular among Rio’s black youth in earlier years. For members of the IPCN, and most notably the Sociedade de Intercâmbio Brasil-África (SINBA, or Society for Brazilian-African Exchange), getting Brazil’s majority officially recognized as black and not a whitened or mixed nation became one of its most urgent endeavors (Alberto 2011, 266, 275).

As critics labeled bossa nova in its emergence as “un-Brazilian,” several prominent sambistas, Afro-Brazilian activists, and samba schools had similarly opposed Black Soul, not only for its “cultural inauthenticity” but also because of its perceived invasion of their turf and their own shrinking islands of cultural relevance (Hanchard 1994). What became unsettling for Martinho da Vila, Monarco, and most sambistas was seeing outsiders rent and occupy the space of the samba schools so they could listen and dance to soul music there.<sup>39</sup> In the samba schools, Elton Medeiros denounced Black Rio as a “product of alienation” of young Brazilians who were being economically exploited by a select few. For Medeiros, “Brazilian men, blacks, and the poor Brazilian class have other problems, different from those of Americans” (*Correio Braziliense* 1977, 11). Instead of closing the doors of Quilombo on the *garotada black* (young fans of soul music), Candeia opened them under the condition that they not make a *baile black* (soul dance) there. His concerns aimed at the means by which Rio’s black youth opted to rehabilitate a feeling of community. In this regard, Candeia found the diaphanous *brasilidade* of motorcycle owning rock junkies from well-to-do families to be more objectionable than that of semiliterate blacks who attended soul dances (Moura 1978, 12). While certainly not a flag-bearer of Black Rio, Candeia approved of his children’s participation in soul dances and their predilection to black power aesthetics as teenagers. As Candeia’s daughter Selma Candeia explained to me, “my father did not embrace the black power movement of the United States, but he did admire the resistance and courage of African Americans to combat their oppressive history.”<sup>40</sup>

Middle-class blacks also harbored reservations about Black Soul, fearing that it would trigger racial tension. And traditional leftists critiqued the movement on the grounds that it was a multinational entertainment venture that diverted attention from class politics (Dunn 2001, 179). Michael George Hanchard finds the stance of the more conservative samba schools ironic, as it was commonplace for police to enter samba schools during this period and make indiscriminate arrests of up to two hundred young black males at one

<sup>35</sup> Unevenness of geopolitical power is certainly one of the motives of Brazilian resistance to North American discourses (Sovik 2009, 58). What is often overlooked, however, is the widespread belief in Brazilian society that race relations in Brazil are superior to those, especially, in the United States. It should be no surprise, then, that Sovik frames her discussion of Brazilian race relations on the observations of Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant. These two scholars assert that US-based scholarship is responsible for the worldwide forgetting and obfuscation of the historical roots of foreign systems of knowledge (French 2003, 41–42). For sharp critiques of Bourdieu and Wacquant’s simplistic model of US domination/imposition, I recommend John French (2003) and Robert Stam (2012).

<sup>36</sup> In the article “Cultura negra no Rio: Ainda desta vez o folclore” (Black Culture in Rio: Even this time folklore) (1977), Lena Frias examines the significance of “cultura negra no Rio,” a cultural project sponsored by the Municipal Secretary of Tourism, Riotur, and Funarte. In so many words, Frias explains that this cultural project emphasized “the mixed Brazilian culture” over the “curious positions of Senghorian negritude that have been assumed recently by some blacks in Rio” (1977, 9).

<sup>37</sup> Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães observes that “since Gilberto Freyre, most Brazilians think that race is a foreign invention, itself a sign of racism, that does not exist for the Brazilian people. That said, what many Brazilians do admit to is prejudice, meaning mistaken individual perceptions, which [may or may not] be corrected in the course of continuing social relations” (2001, 158).

<sup>38</sup> For information on Haiti and Cuba, see James (1989) and Helg (1995) respectively.

<sup>39</sup> Martinho da Vila, interview by author in Rio de Janeiro, July 19, 2016; Monarco (Hildmar Dinis), interview by author in Rio de Janeiro, July 7, 2016.

<sup>40</sup> Selma Candeia, interview by author, November 26, 2016.

time, in the middle of the dance floor (1994, 114). Aversion to Black Soul did not constitute a simplistic divide between so-called conservative and nonconservative samba schools. Candeia, Martinho da Vila, and Elton Medeiros, among others, cast doubt on Black Soul while representing Quilombo, a samba school known for its commitment to black cultural production.<sup>41</sup> Somewhat ironically, Candeia's disapproval of the Brazilian adoption of the African American political imaginary may have blinded some to his embodiment of a certain rectitude and "spirit of defiance" reminiscent of black militants in the United States at the time.<sup>42</sup>

Authored by Candeia in 1977, the partido-alto "Sou Mais o Samba" (I Prefer Samba) rebukes the artistic internationalism of soul, rock, and rumba. In April of that year, the Globo television network program *O Fantástico* aired a report that polemicized *samba de raiz* (roots samba) versus *música black* (black music). The report contrasted viewpoints and closed with a video clip of the release of the partido-alto "Sou Mais o Samba." Performed and sung in a large roda de samba with Clementina de Jesus and Dona Ivone Lara, the extradiegetic voice of a male television journalist of *O Fantástico* presents "Sou Mais o Samba" as "the protest of sambistas against the invasion of soul" (Candeia Filho 2014). The cultural industry capitalized on the polemics. RCA, the American record label, launched a single featuring Candeia beside Dona Ivone Lara and the hit "Sou Mais o Samba" on side A. The Brazilian Department of Education and Culture (MEC) also got on board by motioning for more stringent rules to secure air time and space for Brazilian music and musicians on television, radio, and in nightclubs (Oliveira 2014, 155–156). In an interview with Luiz Felipe de Lima Peixoto and Zé Octávio Sebadelhe, Dom Filó, a close friend of Candeia, remarked that the two of them, in alliance with the organizers of the Soul Grand Prix, decided to take advantage of the circumstances by stoking the controversy of a rivalry that did not exist. Drawing their interpretations from the Filó interview, these authors claim that Candeia used the soul versus samba debate as a marketing ploy, even as early as his 1971 LP *Raiz* (Peixoto and Sebadelhe 2016, 118, 120). Not only is it unlikely that Candeia oriented his artistic process in function of market gains in 1977, but even less so in 1971, which predates the soul versus samba fireball in mainstream Brazilian media.

In "Sou Mais o Samba," Candeia, Dona Ivone Lara, and Clementina de Jesus, along with numerous sambistas, dancers, and common folk, declare with pride not their Afro-Brazilian identity but their Brazilian national identity.<sup>43</sup> African identity, in particular, is repudiated more than any other, as witnessed in the verses "I'm not African, not me" and "I'm not African!" In conversation at a roda de samba in her home in 2010, samba legend Dona Ivone Lara smiled and asked quizzically, "Why should you call Africa 'mom'?" She then proceeded, "We should not associate samba with Africa. I never went to Africa and was not born there. Why should I idolize Africa?"<sup>44</sup> Known for his political activism in Western Africa since his first trip to Angola in 1972 and considered by many to be Brazil's "cultural ambassador" to that country, fellow Quilombo member Martinho da Vila shed light on some of the undercurrents in the thinking of samba luminaries like Candeia and Ivone Lara.<sup>45</sup> As Da Vila sees it, in the 1970s, some black activists in Brazil were proud to be

<sup>41</sup> Luiza Bairros detects similar problems in Hanchard's analysis of Brazil's Movimento Negro (Black Movement). Among her critiques is Hanchard's lack of "historic contextualization" and attention to the diversity of the black movement (1996, 177, 179).

<sup>42</sup> This thoughtful observation belongs to musical composer Rodrigo Caçapa, who shared his thoughts with me on Candeia and Quilombo in São Paulo in December 2014.

<sup>43</sup> Dmitri Cerboncini Fernandes (2014) claims without referencing any historical sources that "Sou Mais o Samba" appeared as a response to accusations that Candeia was attempting to Africanize samba and espouse ideas from US black movements. In Fernandes's analysis, the lyrical voice "opens the possibility of the black-Brazilian option" (2014, 152). A clear nationalist defense of samba with Afro-Brazilian overtones, Fernandes's essay bypasses the complex network of phenomena that shaped the positions of sambistas during this time. Those phenomena are, on the one hand, the role of partido alto as a counterpoint to the military regime and modernization; on the other, Candeia's ambivalence, among other sambistas, toward (African) American and other foreign cultures.

<sup>44</sup> Dona Ivone Lara, interview by author in Rio de Janeiro, July 7, 2010. Among her innumerable accolades, Dona Ivone, known at the time as Ivonne dos Santos, was in 1965 the first woman to author a samba for a major school. Singer, composer, musician, nurse, and mother in a male-dominated world and cultural industry, her race and gender impeded her recognition as a samba composer until after her retirement as a nurse and social worker in the late 1970s (Burns 2009).

<sup>45</sup> Martinho José Ferreira, known as Martinho da Vila, was born on February 12, 1938, in Duas Barras, Rio de Janeiro. Da Vila is an accomplished samba composer, writer, and civil rights activist. Since 1986, Da Vila has published thirteen books and three reprints in genres such as the novel, autobiographical fiction, and children's literature. As a musician, Da Vila has officially composed, since 1969, forty-five albums and seven DVDs in the genre of samba.

Sérgio Jaguaribe ("Jaguar") explains in the documentary *Filosofia de vida: o pequeno burguês* (Philosophy of Life: The Petty Bourgeois) (Mansur 2009) that "Itamaraty, Brazil's diplomatic corps, should confer to Martinho the title of 'ongoing ambassador' for his work in Africa; orchestrated entirely on his own. Martinho's work is perhaps the most important in terms of approximating Africa and Brazil." In a thought-provoking interview delivered to the magazine *Fora de Série* (2010), Da Vila considers Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's inauguration as president more significant than that of Barack Obama's: "We had a revolution, as did the United States, upon putting a black man in the presidency, yet ours was as big or greater: We put a northeastern blue-collar man in the presidency" (19–20). This interview speaks to the power of one's national identity, and how Da Vila's own may, on occasion, outshine his advocacy for the advancement of Afro-descendants of other nations.

black, and proud of their African origins, but also critical of a newfound adoption of African clothing and hairstyles.<sup>46</sup> Despite soul's popularity among many Brazilians, Candeia foresaw it as a fad, whose adherents would eventually become sambistas, "Relax, relax, everybody/Why so much bambambam/The blacks of today/Are the sambistas of tomorrow" (Candeia Filho 1977b).

Throughout this essay, I have stressed that samba music and culture in the 1970s were compounded of a gamut of socioeconomic and political factors that mobilized primarily members of the Portela samba school and Quilombo to initiate a hermeneutical approach to samba's social history. The transition of samba culture into a burgeoning tourist industry, along with the military regime's disfiguration of samba music for patriotic ends, sowed the seeds for the creation of Quilombo in 1975. While Quilombo nurtured Afro-Brazilian musical and cultural forms, it concerned itself, notably so, with the prosperity of social cohesion and creativity over the velocity and standardization of samba music. Often pigeonholed as a "samba preservationist," Antônio Candeia Filho, Quilombo's leader and one of its cofounders, also pioneered samba music in the early 1970s by tapping into diverse sources of African diasporic music. His distaste for foreign, largely US cultural domination, however, stymied potential engagement with Pan-Africanism. Lastly, the apex of Black Soul's popularity in the late 1970s reinforced Brazilian exceptionalism in Rio's samba community, as sambistas like Candeia, Elton Medeiros, Clementina de Jesus, and Dona Ivone Lara, among others, cast samba music in an inclusive, nationalist tone as a means to garner support against the overbearing presence of certain foreign sounds and cultures.

### Acknowledgements

A version of this essay was presented in 2011 at the program of philosophy, POP-LAB (Núcleo Transdisciplinar de Estudos em Filosofia e Cultura Pop) at the UNIRIO, Rio de Janeiro. I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers of that event, Charles Feitosa and Jair Martins de Miranda, and to the doctoral students for their sharp questions and feedback. Many thanks also go out to Anani Dzidzienyo, Muniz Sodré, Luiz Valente, Sergio Cabral, Dona Ivone Lara, Beth Carvalho, Paulinho da Viola, Monarco, Elton Medeiros, Luiz Antonio Simas, Nei Lopes, Rodrigo Caçapa, Martinho da Vila, Selma Candeia, Fernando Rosa, Philip Galinsky, Christopher Dunn, Bruno Bacellar, Márcia Watzl, Fábio Borges, Carlos Alberto Medeiros, and Bill Di Nome for their resourcefulness and support. I am also indebted to *LARR's* three anonymous readers for their detailed comments and invaluable critiques.

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**How to cite this article:** Bocskay, S. Undesired Presences: Samba, Improvisation, and Afro-politics in 1970s Brazil. *Latin American Research Review*. 2017; 52(1), pp. 64-78. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25222/larr.71>

**Submitted:** 18 June 2015

**Accepted:** 15 April 2016

**Published:** 19 July 2017

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