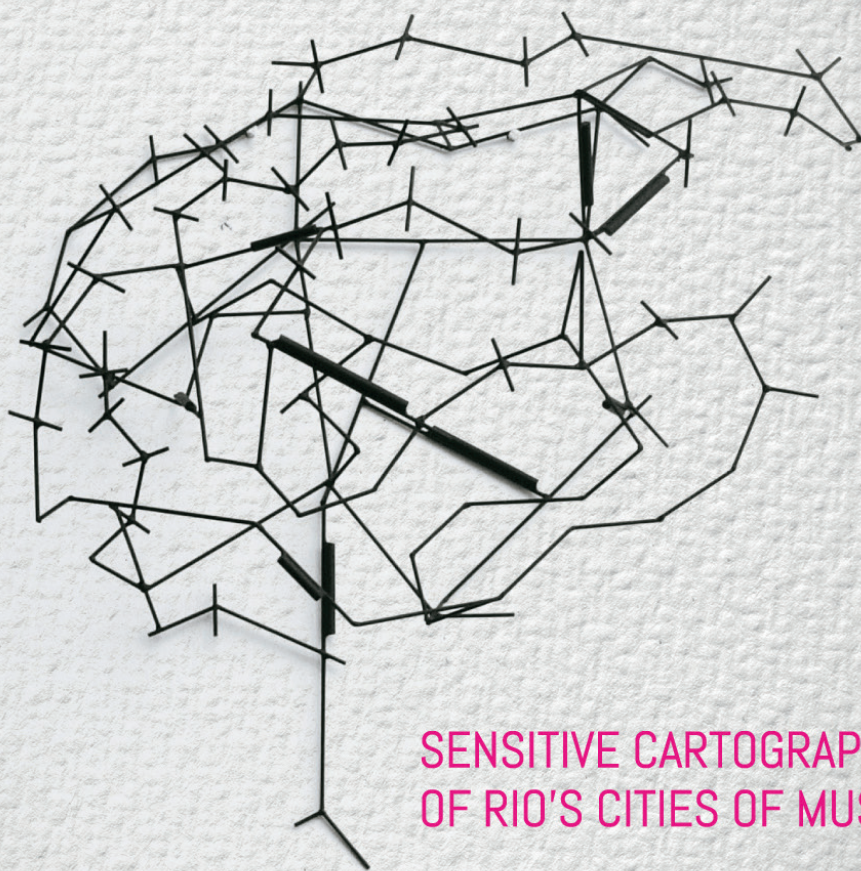




THE MOVING FORCE OF MUSIC



SENSITIVE CARTOGRAPHIES
OF RIO'S CITIES OF MUSIC



Micael Herschmann
Cíntia Sanmartin Fernandes

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The Moving Force of Music

Sensitive Cartographies of
Rio's Cities of Music

Micael Herschmann
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To Alessandra, Clara,
Janaína, Leandro, Maria
Eduarda, Pedro Ivo, Stela,
and Verônica. Kindred
spirits who have lovingly
and playfully taught us how
to share the world.

We start from what is henceforth a dilated story that makes unexpected demands to cultivate response-ability [...] The risk of listening to a story is that it can obligate us in ramifying webs that cannot be known in advance of venturing among their myriad threads [...] Attached to ongoing pasts, they bring each other forward in thick presents and still possible futures; they stay with the trouble in speculative fabulation. (Haraway, 2016, pp.132-133)¹.

Don't you see those rivers that never fill the sea? Our lives are like that too: everything is still to live for [...] (Couto, 2004)².

¹HARAWAY, Donna J. *Staying with the Trouble*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.

²COUTO, Mia. *The Last Flight of the Flamingo*. London: Serpent's Tail, 2004.

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Brief notes on an extensive cartographic survey

The fascination with everyday life in the city contributed significantly to uniting and putting in (com)motion two researchers whose views focused on the sensitive and intelligible interactions taking place in localities in and around Paraty, Rio de Janeiro, Conservatória, and Rio das Ostras in recent years, especially those that revolved around musical experiences. The strong conviction that these musical manifestations are paradoxically managed not only by instances of power, but also by local actors in powerful biopolitical initiatives (which translated into everyday practices of “re-existence”) that promote social inclusion guided the set of reflections herein elaborated by these cartographers of festive and “transpolitical” (Susca, 2019) urban experiences.

That way, despite the more adverse and authoritarian context experienced in recent years under the rule of far-right governments in the country, we continue to map (sensitively) the streets of the city of Rio de Janeiro as researchers of artistic expressions that (re) invent themselves with the city and, in a gesture of perseverance and unfolding of previous research projects (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014), incorporate into our cartographic work three more cities on the coast and in the countryside of the state of Rio de Janeiro (Paraty, Conservatória, and Rio das Ostras). That is, we have followed, over the last five years, actors/collectives and their respective networks, which have remained *malgré tout* active in these cities, resignifying

imaginaries based on powerful “soundscapes” (Schafer, 1969). We considered these political-sonic-musical acts (Fernandes, 2021) found in everyday life relevant and capable of building “sonic-musical territorialities” (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014), which, in general, take the form of circles, balls, processions, and frequent street micro-events.

Our research focused on analysing the dynamics involving activist collectives and their networks inasmuch as these occupy the city, often carried out under official authorisation but also in an informal and even clandestine manner. Our intention was to track the actors, following the controversies and building cartographies that would allow us to understand cities not only from the perspective of functionality, acceleration, impersonality, risks, and fear, but also as places marked by encounters, sociability, affections, and experiences of deceleration. Our goal was to offer both analyses as well as urban fabulations that would also privilege less visible aspects of metropolitan musical experiences – especially the underground ones, which are “off the radar” of public authorities.

We should highlight that, in developing our empirical research, we were inspired by Haraway’s “tentacular thinking”¹ (2019a, 2019b, 2021, 2022) and ended up resorting to some metaphors originating from Gaia’s universe, which are put forth in the works of relevant authors who turned into key interlocutors in our reflections on the arrangements of music in the cities mapped.

The first of these metaphors is related to our own conditions as “researcher ants”, who work in fundamental reference to Latour’s

¹Haraway’s thinking (2019a, 2019b, 2021, 2022) is provocative and capable of expanding our reflections on the various consequences engendered by the Capitalocene and on the need to think and imagine “possible futures”, especially through “speculative fabulations”. Haraway’s “tentacular thinking-doing” means “feeling and trying” (found in the etymology of the very word “tentacle”)– or, rather, it implies testing methodological boundaries to articulate and expand knowledge in an innovative way.

Actor-Network Theory – which is also supported by other experts within the epistemology of science – and his concept of a necessary deconstruction of the “Sociology of the Social” (Latour, 2012; Lemos, 2013; Callon, 2010). For us, “cartographers of the controversies” of ANT (Actor-Network Theory), this theoretical and methodological approach constitutes a forceful critique of sociological theories that are based on social categories and, at the same time, bet on a radical appreciation of empirical work. In his work, Latour highlights the importance of not giving in to the temptation of using shortcuts and schematic explanations as well as emphasising the need to continue to view the social world from the perspective of an “ant” – acting very closely to the actors and following their daily lives in all their aggregations (Latour, 2012).

The second metaphor is that of “bees”, as argued by economist Moulier-Boutang. By using the notion of “pollination”, the author identifies, in the interdependent daily practices of networks, this type of work, which, like that of bees, is not recognised but is crucial for the aggregation of value and for the functioning of contemporary capitalism. In the case of bees, the contribution of these insects to the pollination of the biosphere is priceless, as it is vital to the survival of the planet and of life itself. Likewise, the power of the externalities produced by social networks is vital to the functioning of current capitalism: it is whence it extracts a large part of its wealth (Moulier-Boutang, 2007 and 2010). Thus, we can consider the collaborative work of the actors who build Rio’s street music culture as fundamental to the construction of the city’s everyday and rich sociocultural life, in which different social segments take part; not just tourists and the economic elite who certainly have the resources to enjoy the range of events that have been offered in the new globalised city that has been under construction since the beginning of the 21st century. By turning their backs on “Rio’s pollen society” – that is, by gentrifying

this location and imposing a series of dynamics of regulation and repression, as has been widely the case in the city –, public authorities may be seriously damaging the more fluid and creative urban functioning in the region. Fortunately, unlike bees (practically extinct in some parts of the world due to the serious imbalances engendered by the Anthropocene) – as we were able to observe in our research –, artists and their networks do not stop “pollinating” and resignifying this metropolis, which, despite everything (especially the fact that it is undergoing an unprecedented crisis), continues to show signs of vitality in its everyday.

The third and fourth metaphors are those of “fireflies” and “butterflies”, as per the work of philosopher and art historian Didi-Huberman. The metaphor of “fireflies”, previously used by Dante and Pasolini, is taken up again in radiant fashion by Didi-Huberman in his book *Survival of the Fireflies* (2011), referencing the famous 1975 article by Pasolini “The Power Vacuum in Italy”, in which the filmmaker laments the death of fireflies – for him, figurative flashes to moments of grace that resist the world of terror, that is, flashes to innocence in contexts marked by annihilation and precariousness as a result of fascism and, later, of the triumphant bourgeois lifestyle. Didi-Huberman (2011) questions Pasolini’s desperate fatalism, identifying possible firefly flashes in the arrangements of experiences and images in contemporaneity. The philosopher thus rescues Arendt’s notion of resurgence, for whom it is necessary to recognise the vitality of survival and memory when the latter finds fair ways of transmission. Finally, in other works of his in which he addresses related topics – especially the dynamics of “uprisings” –, Didi-Huberman deals with the power of political pamphlets, also known in French as *papillons* (“butterflies”). For him, butterflies are messages of disobedience that have, from the outset, “been made to fly”; made to be thrown into the crowds. They are therefore almost always thrown into the clouds: it is not known

exactly *how* and *if* these messages will be received. The author also highlights that, by and large, these are texts made of light and shadow in the name of this power of uprising (Didi-Huberman, 2019). It is worth highlighting that, in formal and informal conversations that we had with actors in the cities studied, they almost always highlighted, in their discourse, the ability that music has to create seductive and engaging atmospheres and ambiances – that is, the ability to positively resignify urban experiences, even in contexts of increasing state repression and growing violence in the city. At the same time, these actors emphasise the importance of musical “performances” (Taylor, 2013) as a way of transmitting knowledge directly and indirectly associated with the cultures of minorities in the city. These musical experiences offer powerful experiences of sound immersion, conveying relevant political messages that make up an imaginary and, in a way, another possible world in the everyday of these cities.

At this point, we would like to underline that it would have probably been impossible to carry out this herculean task and develop this “tentacular” perspective of this study – in building these sensitive cartographies and the controversies of these four musical cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro – had we not been able to count on the valuable collaboration and tireless support from the inter-institutional research team that was assembled between the research group Communications, Art, and the City (associated with the Postgraduate Programme in Communications at the State University of Rio de Janeiro) and the Centre for Studies and Projects in Communications (associated with the Postgraduate Programme in Communications at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro). These teams accompanied us in almost every stage of the extensive fieldwork, which not only gave us the opportunity, on countless occasions, to discuss our reflections, excerpts from the field, and controversial information with these researchers, but we were also able to count on their presence and commitment

to contributing to the difficult task of “following the [local] actors” (Latour, 2012).

In addition to the logistical issues and the great challenges in working with an extensive empirical *corpus* (which involved dealing with different “realities” and social dynamics of different locations in this macro-region), it was likewise difficult to finish the latter part of this research due to the impact of the fast (and constant) transmission and sanitary measures adopted in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic in the country. We could briefly list some of the challenges that we faced and that unquestionably affected the results herein presented: a) the impossibility of carrying out fieldwork in person in the chosen cities for a long period, given the risks posed by the pandemic to actors and all those directly or indirectly involved in this investigation; b) the distortion of socioeconomic data of these cities, due to a deep crisis that dramatically affected the actors in these localities (exceptionally triggered by the pandemic); c) and, evidently, the interruption of most of the activities previously carried out by artists/producer in these territories and of the routine and scheduled cultural dynamics in these cities, as well as the redirecting of a large part of public policy towards emergency programmes (assistance and support) for the actors in these cities. In fact, it was not only the pandemic that imposed obstacles to this academic initiative: as of 2016, the rise to power of far-right conservative and religious groups at the city, state, and federal levels has made it difficult not only to implement progressive and democratic public policies in different regions, but also to secure resources for science and technology in the country (making it at times difficult, given these deficiencies, to complete stages of our research agenda).

In these first lines lies our intention to inform the reader that the goal of this academic initiative was to present the public not only with a book holding the results of a long research project carried out

between 2017 and 2022, but also with a digital platform containing the sensitive cartographies of the four cities studied (<http://www.cartografiasmusicais.com.br>). Our intention was to offer a digital platform – encompassing extensive audiovisual material – in which users could access accounts from actors and get to know the activities and events taking place in these locations: our bet is that, by accessing this varied content, the public will be able to understand the potential for reconfiguring musical initiatives – that is, not only their capacity to contribute to the democratisation of access to cultural life and spaces in these territories, but also their importance for building synergies with other production chains as well as new levels of sustainable local development. In other words, we sought to offer mediated access to a set of sensitive experiences that may present more tangible elements for the public to (re)dimension the relevance of music in processes that resignify everyday life and the imaginary of these cities.

Evidently, we could not conclude these initial notes without thanking the researchers, local actors, research assistants, technicians, and both undergraduate and postgraduate students who contributed in any measure to the reflections and the research project that supported the making of this book and the digital cartographic platform. We would like to express our gratitude to the following collaborators: Andrea Estevão, Antônio Consciência, Carla Helal, Cristiane Carvalho, Cristiane Mazedo, Eduardo Bianchi, Erick Felinto, Fabiano Lacombe, Flavia Magalhães, Indira Oliveira, Janaína Mello, Joaquim Lima, João Grand Junior, Leonardo de Marchi, Luciana Guilherme, Luiza Kosovski, Marcos Rego, Marialva Barbosa, Maria Lívia Roriz, Michelle Ezequiel, Rafael J. da Silva, Rodrigo Morelato, Sami Brasil, Stênio Matos, Tatiane Mendes, Taissa Maia, Taíza Moraes, and Victor Belart. In addition, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who collaborated with the book and who might have not unfortunately been mentioned. And, finally, we would like to take

this opportunity to thank FAPERJ, CAPES, and CNPq – important research funding agencies in the country – for the fundamental support that allowed the implementation of these academic initiatives in a context of such an adverse and complex crisis in Brazil.

In conclusion, we would like to highlight two aspects found in writing this book. First, we would like to emphasise that it was not our intention, in any way, to exhaust the debate on musical (and creative) cities or to present “solutions or redeeming alternatives”, but, rather, we sought to support the construction of a necessary, broad, and fruitful dialogue that would allow us to “stay with the trouble” (Haraway, 2019a, 2019b, 2022) – that is, enable different leaders, specialists, artists, technicians, and politicians to continue facing, in a questioning and democratic fashion, the challenges of Brazil’s cities as they look for competitiveness and/or sustainable local development (Buarque, 2008).

Secondly, we would like to highlight that this book is not aimed solely at members of the academic community but, rather, at a wider audience interested in delving deeper into debates on the possible roles of “creativity” (Florida, 2005; Reis, 2012) in the construction of virtuous cycles of urban prosperity. Based on case studies of the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Paraty, Rio das Ostras, and Conservatória, we seek to present the reader with a range of rich city experiences which will certainly support a more critical and plural understanding of the complexity of the challenges that have been faced in the state of Rio de Janeiro, especially within local processes and dynamics – more or less institutionalised – that use culture as a fundamental vector for reaching new levels of local development.

1 The challenge of researching cities of music, especially their less visible everyday practices and dynamics²

*What nation is this
That speaks out through the voice of drums
What nation is this [...]
That rocks the worlds, that drags the masses
[...] a poet in the square
Nation of rhythms, of the Brazilian guitar
Of bossa nova, samba de roda [...]
Nation of revolutionary musicians [...]
City of music, of music [...]*

(Excerpts from song *Cidade da Música*,
by Daniela Mercury)

The concept of “creative city” is increasingly prominent when it comes to contemporary cultural policies, especially in cities. We know, however, that the focus on creativity linked to urban planning is not new and has, in fact, been used in different ways: in that sense, since the late 1970s all the way to the early 2000s, authors such as Arantes (2002), Zukin (1982), Vaz e Jacques (2001) discussed the progression of the pairing of culture with urban planning and design (Seldin, 2015; 2016). These and many more authors suggest that the phenomenon of deindustrialisation has led to a series of economic setbacks in cities that, until then, had been heavily dependent on the manufacturing of consumer goods. Growing unemployment and

²Portions of this chapter were published in Fernandes & Herschmann, 2018.

the degradation of the urban landscape have been only a few of the consequences of this phenomenon, which has affected several cities around the world. Thus, images of decaying and deindustrialised cities have led to urban managers desperately trying to revive local economies through investment, especially in the construction of clusters, creative districts, and tourist hubs.

At the same time, it is clear that, in the 21st century, the notion of creativity has acquired a new guise – presented as an alternative to the construction of more prosperous post-industrial cities, capable of contributing decisively to the reconfiguration of the image of cities seeking to insert themselves more competitively in the globalised world (Reis, 2012).

Despite the somewhat lax use of this notion, we take “creativity” here to be an important asset in the dynamics of contemporary capitalism (of the so-called “Cognitive Capitalism”): a potential that is expressed as “living knowledge” and as collaborative knowledge, made of the interactions between different types of knowledge, such as technical, scientific, artistic, and tacit (i.e., based on everyday experiences) (Moulier-Boutang, 2007; Cocco *et al.*, 2003).

To avoid any misunderstandings, it is important to situate the reader in relation to the perspective developed here, which seeks overall to construct a very critical view of projects dealing with music and creative cities that have been implemented in Brazil. Nevertheless, it is also necessary to emphasise that the reader will not find here an *a priori* condemnation of such projects and process that have been organised in various territories, as it is necessary to acknowledge – even in these local dynamics – the engagement and often the “good faith” of many actors directly and indirectly involved in the restless search for not only a collective project but also new levels of development in their respective territories. In other words, it would be easy to quickly disqualify, in this book, the theories, initiatives, and debates on creative

cities in any context – but, at the same time, deeply superficial and reductionist –, arguing, for example, that, behind of all them, what is mostly being built is a gentrified territory, exclusionary and friendly especially towards tourist interest (preferably upper-class) and, in general, towards the business world of the big players to the detriment of local interests, of the majority of the population (especially the “right to the city” [Lefebvre, 2015] of the poorer or minority social segments). At the same time, of course, our perspective is rather critical of the stance of some experts from numerous cities who have been eagerly seeking quick and “redemptive” solutions: one could give the example of those who hastily embrace Charles Landry’s three Cs (culture, communication, and coöperation) and/or those who incorporate Richard Florida’s three Ts (talent, technology, and tolerance) in replicating development policy models for these localities (Landry & Bianchini, 2000; Florida, 2002).

One of the keys to understand the assumptions that guide the authors of this book in, without a doubt, offered by Szaniecki, when she states that: “culture is ambiguously biopolitical [...] it constitutes power over life but also a transformative power of life itself” (Szaniecki, 2016, p. 23). The central hypothesis adopted here is, therefore, that, when public authorities and institutions define locations within the state of Rio de Janeiro as “creative cities”, their population find themselves faced with this ambiguity: on the one hand, there are processes of submission to the different spheres of “biopower” (Foucault, 2010) that is more or less institutionalised in each region, and, on the other, there are also possibilities for actors to (re)construct “re-existences” (Fernandes *et al.*, 2022) and processes of ressignification relevant to the everyday of these cities (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

1.1 Creative Cities in Brazil

Despite the many criticisms from local actors identified throughout our research in these localities, the project of building “creative cities” (Fernandes & Herschmann, 2018) has gained relevance in public policy and urban planning agendas. There seems to be a growing awareness amongst leaders, artists, and public authorities that the city should be the unit from which to propose and implement public policies that benefit the cultural economy since the activities therein comprised are profoundly intertwined with other economic sectors and social issues (such as tourism, gastronomy, quality of life, sustainable development, education, housing, leisure, the right to the city, history – to name a few) that offer a high potential for producing positive “externalities” in each of these areas and, in general, for the territory (Cocco, 2003).

The construction of these “creative cities” is today part of an emerging citywide activism seeking to activate a set of strategies to make localities better prepared to face “interurban competition in a globalised world” (Vivant, 2012). The big question therefore is: how to take cities out of a situation of stagnation or industrial decline and transform them into more attractive and dynamic territories? These neo-developmental strategies evidently vary considerably – not only in terms of the endogeny and densities of the processes, but also due to the instability of the policies implemented (which begin and end according to the interests of local leaders and politicians) (Reis, 2012). In fact, the discontinuity of policies is generally pointed out by experts as one of the major barriers in the Brazilian context (Rubim, 2007; De Marchi, 2018).

Specifically, with regard to the musical modality, there are, in general, two lines of action. The first one foresees tax incentives granted to the establishment of clusters and districts in the localities, which

facilitate the exchange of knowledge and the association between players. The second one, on the other hand, focuses on activities related to live music, from large festivals involving major music stars and widely publicised stories in the media to micro street events that mobilise their niche audiences basically through posts in and audiovisual material shared mostly in social media.

However, it has been the case that, through UNESCO sponsorship, policies for the development of musical cities have acquired greater legitimacy, visibility, and institutionality. Since the 2004 creation of the Creative Cities Network, UNESCO have promoted coöperation between cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. This initiative is closely associated with a certain approach of the entity when it comes to cultural diversity, and it joins the efforts of another UN agency – the UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) – to present the creative economy as a set of strategies to achieve ecologically and economically sustainable as well as socially inclusive development.

In the case of Brazil, first of all, discussions about creative economies and cities gained traction from debates about cultural policies that were implemented during Gilberto Gil and Juca Ferreira's administration – later acquiring more effectiveness, especially under the administration of Ana de Hollanda, in the Ministry of Culture, with the creation of the Special Secretariat for the Creative Economy. Unfortunately, the greater investment in creativity coincides with the gradual abandonment of other successful programmes with greater reach and social relevance, such as the *Pontos de Cultura do Cultura Viva* (Szaniecki, 2016). Thus, on the one hand, the assumption is that projects that value local creator networks, such as *Pontos de Cultura*, and investment in the creation of secretariats for Creative Economies (at city, state, and federal levels) could have coexisted in the country. In that sense, some researchers – such as João Grand Junior and João

Luiz Figueiredo – argue that it is possible to build, in Brazil, “another theoretical and conceptual perspective for the creative economy, taking into account the everyday life and dynamics of creator networks within territories, which could be called the ‘creative and popular economy’”.³ On the other hand, attention to the more endogenous and collaborative aspects of the creative processes of territories has unfortunately been relegated to a secondary level by the public policies that have been prioritised in the country since 2012. For some critics, this global shift in policies towards creative economies has contributed to hardening a neoliberal logic in the urban everyday and imaginary, which tends to place entrepreneurship and creativity increasingly at the centre of the construction of a competitive territory in today’s globalised world: these authors postulate that this “shift” has often resulted in the prioritisation of big capital’s interests and has generally led to the precarisation and accountability of local actors for the failure of such initiatives (Raudig, 2008; Szaniecki, 2012). The fact, for example, that the organisation of the Brazilian Network of Creative Cities has been taken over by the Ministry of Tourism⁴ leads us to two relevant and not necessarily mutually exclusive conclusions: first, in the absence of a Ministry of Culture (shut down in 2019 under the administrative reforms of then-president Bolsonaro), the Ministry of Tourism was called upon to suppress the representation of this debate at the federal and international levels; secondly, the logic of tourism dominates initiatives involving creative cities.

³Comment made in an interview with João Grand Junior, geographer and researcher of creative economies, as part of this research project on August 11, 2022.

⁴For more information on the formation of this network of creative cities, see: Ministério do Turismo. *MTur e Unesco selecionam consultoria para implementação da Rede Brasileira de Cidades Criativas*. Gov.br, Brasília, July 27, 2022. (Available at: <<https://www.gov.br/turismo/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/mtur-e-unesco-selecionam-consultoria-para-implementacao-da-rede-brasileira-de-cidades-criativas>>. Accessed: August 8, 2022).

Regardless, the fact remains that projects and investments in the construction of creative cities have become increasingly common: they have not only amassed the support of local technicians and leaders, but have also generated countless developments in the country, especially from the point of view of territorial marketing strategies. One example of the growing interest in the construction of creative cities is that, according to information released by city governments, by 2022 there were twelve Brazilian locations around the country which had already been designated UNESCO Creative Cities, namely: a) Florianópolis, Belo Horizonte, Paraty, and Belém (Gastronomy); b) Brasília, Curitiba, and Fortaleza (Design); c) João Pessoa (Crafts and Folk Arts); d) Santos (Film); e) Campina Grande (Media Arts); and f) Salvador and Recife (Music).

Analysing the fuss and the commitment of these cities to obtain this UNESCO designation, we could ask: why is it so important for so many cities today to be recognised nationally and internationally as places of creative economies? Could this, in fact, represent significant competitive advantages for territories in the globalised world and/or are opportunistic territorial marketing strategies very much in vogue today? Further, for the populations who live in these cities: does it effectively support the establishment of more inclusive (democratic) local dynamics and public policies that will therefore be able to contribute to new levels of sustainable development in these regions? These and more questions guide part of the analyses developed in this book.

Discussion on creative economies, industries, and cities arrived in Brazil over the last decade, during the administration of then-Minister of Culture, Gilberto Gil, associated with the debate on the relevance of information and knowledge in contemporary society. Established and implemented in the 1990s as the main reference for the production of public policies in England – and achieving some significant results –, this set of assumptions and concepts – many of them precarious – was

absorbed in Brazil and other countries in an uncritical fashion. In a way, Brazilian authorities and those of other regions “bought into” a neo-developmental debate which encompasses numerous fields of knowledge – but especially economics, geography, urban planning, communication, tourism, and sociology – and which has been arguing for new models of socioeconomic growth (with a more or less neoliberal tone, depending on the region) around the world. With the crisis of industrial models, the saturation of the service sector, and the rise of the digital age, a growing number of authorities and technocrats started embracing, from the 1990s onwards, the idea that the alternative to recovery and building a context of greater prosperity would involve the construction of innovative local networks or clusters – and that this would generate significant competitive advantages for the actors and regions in the globalised world. So, notions such as “economy” and “creative city” gain terrain all over the world and, especially, within prominent international organisations – such as the WTO, UNESCO, and the IBD – concerned with the recurring global crises. It is always relevant to emphasise how the use of new technologies, especially from the second half of the 1990s onwards, led to the “implosion” of the factory in a certain way, and productive activities began to be organised in networks and across territories (not surprisingly, for some authors, the “city is considered the new factory”, the current space for “articulation” and “struggles”). The result is that the city continues to acquire centrality, towards which possible collective projects migrate.⁵

Therefore, the question that emerges in some way in exchanges involving researchers – who are faced with the challenge of taking this debate on “creative cities” with the required level of seriousness

⁵The concept of “Creative Cities” was first introduced by two architects, Landry and Bianchini, in 1994, but was later taken up again with different meanings by numerous others (Landry & Bianchini, 1994; Reis, 2012; Florida, 2002).

and rigour – is that investing in this debate would perhaps give more visibility to a “mimetic” and “reductionist” logic that relies on “recipes for success”. That is, by shedding light on a set of “ideas out of place” (Schwarz, 1999) of different specific contexts, the question that guides these discussions is if, by considering the horizon and assumptions, one would not be endorsing in some way the implementation of a neoliberal agenda and/or even an “exogenous model”, which have been replicated in different cities around the world.

Despite these risks, it is likewise important to note that this creative-city agenda has already been adopted by a significant number of technocrats from different regions of the planet as a way for cities to position themselves and compete for investments, resources, and volume of consumption with other metropolises today. Therefore, by taking on this challenge of researching creative cities, we seek not only to ensure that discussions dig deeper and acquire a more critical dimension (not restricted to the agenda of public managers and politicians), but we also seek to enable the construction – however precarious – of a necessary dialogue between the academic environment and society at large, around a topic of great relevance for the current state of affairs.

Furthermore, many more proactive researchers question if it would not actually be possible for such investigations hitherto carried out to contribute to a possible review of current public policies, making the processes of building creative cities more democratic and “endogenous”, enabling local actors to play a greater role in redefining territories so that these policies begin to directly privilege the construction or the expansion of the welfare state of its inhabitants or even the construction of a “commonwealth”. The idea underlying Hardt and Negri’s (2009) thinking is that there would be no “commonwealth” without the process of producing it: therefore, the commonwealth would be a constant collective enterprise – that is, it would be a

totality constituted by elementary, essential goods, such as air, light, oceans, food, bodies, environmental heritage in addition to that which we create for our own benefit, such as art, free software, the internet, public spaces in cities, as well as the community management of these goods amongst peers (which, from the perspective of these authors, should effectively govern themselves).

1.2 Music in and of the city

The idea of using music as a significant turning point that could dynamise a given territory is an increasingly present argument in specialised literature and in discourses by local authorities and leaders.⁶ The success of festivals that have become regionalised – such as Lollapalooza (in Chicago), Reading (in Leeds), Sónar (in Barcelona), and SXSW (in Austin) – is often attributed to these events having benefited some metropolises in different ways. At the same time, the expression “musical cities” has gained more notoriety globally (we could as far as to say that it has become popular) since 2004, when this type of designation was created by UNESCO for cities that have a very strong musical production in their territory (for locations that supposedly have a “regional vocation” for music).⁷

⁶Some experts even postulate that the moment of organising and holding events such as music festivals (Bennett *et al.*, 2014; Wynn, 2015) may become foundational events that would bring together actors from different social segments and that could leverage not only local development, but also “cosmopolitan sociability” (and even establish more “intercultural” relations in a territory). Now, without entirely disagreeing with this literature, what the research presented in this volume has been signalling is that this occasionally happens in some cities, but there are also processes and developments that go in other directions and involve processes of exclusion, authoritarian practices, and corruption, requiring more careful and less generalising reflection.

⁷UNESCO began to associate titles to territories as long as these cities were able to prove that their territory had some creative sector amongst the seven that the organisation considers strategic (the sectors considered crucial are Crafts & Folk Art, Media Arts,

Our proposition here is to insert, depend, and expand the discussions on creative dynamics in cities, privileging the set of reflections that contemplate the experiences lived by the actors – valuing the experiences of bodies in performative, sonic, tactile, and/or theatrical performances –, considering, above all, urban spaces as a “widely practiced space” (De Certeau, 1994). The starting point here is that it is important to consider not only whether the “city itself is musical” – i.e., whether it has institutionalised dynamics involving everything from music education, production, and circulation to its consumption; whether it has historically had a significant and tangible production that would allow claims that there is a “local vocation”⁸ focused on this artistic practice; whether there are professionals and/or private and public cultural venues used for the exhibition of this regional productions; and/or public policies to promote and support this type of activity. It is also important to consider the plots of “music in the city” (in the analyses, it is also necessary to take into account: spontaneous

Film, Design, Gastronomy, Literature, and Music). Therefore, UNESCO created the Creative Cities Network (UCCN) to promote coöperation between cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. Today, there are almost two hundred cities in this network – and, of those, a few dozen designated as musical cities, including Bologna, Glasgow, Seville, and, since 2016, the city of Salvador (in the state of Bahia). (For more information, see: <<http://en.unesco.org/creative-cities>>. Accessed: December 15, 2022).

⁸Although it is possible to identify highly dynamic sectors (of the economy) and productive (creative) networks in the territories, we use the term “local or regional vocation” here with many reservations, in a very critical manner. Unlike part of the literature that analyses the role of cities in the globalised world and celebrates the identification of regional vocations (Sassen, 1996), many dense empirical studies on local development not only warn us about the plurality of significant activities carried out in many of these locations (many of which are not identified as such by the government), but also question this type of reductionist perspective (Figueiredo & Jesus, 2017). They ask whether, by privileging these vocations with support and public policies, these cities would not be at the same time channelling resources and, in a certain way, “turning their backs” on other relevant wealth, also capable of contributing to the development of these regions.

production and dynamics that are not fully institutionalised; invisible local musical ecosystems found in everyday life; and/or transgressive minority musical practices, which disrupt or are even prohibited and which challenge the regulatory practices of the city) that are generally “off the radar” of public authorities but which constitute significant local wealth. In other words, throughout this book, we focus not only on what was very apparent and discussed in these cities – that is, we analyse the potential of the “(in)visible and underground musical ecosystems”, likewise offering for reflection cartographies of the “almost-invisible” collective musical experiences of these localities. This, in this book, we seek to reflect on the relevance of the “musical ecosystems of little visibility and/or almost underground” (virtual and in-person) as important assets: evaluating their synergistic potential in the direct and indirect increase of the “chains of creative economies” of strategic cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro, such as the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Paraty, Conservatório, and Rio das Ostras.

1.3 Idiosyncrasies of four cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro

Based on case studies of the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Paraty, Conservatória, and Rio das Ostras, the focus was therefore on analysing the importance of live musical activities performed in public and private spaces by collective artists and/or social networks for the redefinition of these cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro. In other words, we sought to rethink their capacity to convert these territories into more democratic spaces (with better levels of inclusion and social participation) and with more intercultural dynamics. The premise is that there is a powerful musical culture in these locations, practiced by various actors (the vast majority of whom are “engaged”), which is capable of creating conditions not only for the expansion of sociability,

but also for the innovative redefinition of the spaces in these cities (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

Evidently, these cities have a consistent number of musical activities that are scheduled to be carried out in private spaces and have an important function in the construction of an urban imaginary of “territorialities” (Haesbert, 2010) and sociabilities that gravitate around music (unfortunately, not always are spaces capable of providing exchange between various social segments). More than that: these cities have been able to house – especially due to the articulation of local actors – significant “music scenes” (Straw, 2006) in their territories.

The hypothesis that guided the concluded investigation was based on the assumption that there would be “musical cities” throughout Brazil and the world (evidently, with their respective and relevant singularities), such as the four cities that are being researched. Somewhat different from the notion of “musical cities” (as a type of “creative city”⁹), as formulated by UNESCO, this concept is used to designate locations that have significant “sonic-musical territorialities” that, through action over time, promote significant changes in the urban imagination and daily life (Bennett *et al.*, 2014; Wynn, 2015).

⁹The concepts of “creative industries”, “creative economy”, and “creative nation” from which the concept of “creative cities” was derived (most of these coined in the first half of the 1990s) include dynamics of production, circulation, and consumption of creative and cultural goods, covering, in a diffuse manner, fields such as architecture, arts, crafts, antiques, audiovisual, design, publishing, video games, software, fashion, music, advertising, television, theatre, and radio. In general, the creative sectors are made up of a set of absolutely heterogeneous fields that generally acquire great visibility, thanks to the strength and omnipresence of globalised tourism and the strength of the logic of entertainment in everyday life. (For more details, see: Hartley, 2005 and Reis, 2012). According to UNESCO, “creative cities” would bring together sectors of the powerful creative industries in their territory (for more information, see: <<http://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/home>>, accessed: November 29, 2022). See Reis (2012) for the polysemy of meanings attributed to the concept of “creative cities”.

The notion of “sonic-musical territorialities” seeks to highlight the importance of music and the countless sounds present in the everyday of cities for the reterritorialization processes that will be carried out by the actors studied. Often, the decision of the area that will be occupied with music takes into account not only the circulation of the actors, but also the flow and intensity of the sonic flows of the locality (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014). These more or less temporary territorialities, due to their regularity, generate a series of direct and indirect local benefits for the territory (even allowing the increase of local socioeconomic activities). In fact, as suggested by some authors in Sound Studies (Labelle, 2010; Kittler, 1999; Connor, 2000; Denora, 2000), they are relevant because they affect the rhythm, the imaginary, and the bodies in everyday life, reconfiguring the territories in some way. These territorialities would therefore construct new sonic or acoustic cartographies of the city. In other words, these “sonic-musical territorialities” – due to the recurrence of their presence, the intensity of the affections aroused (which promote enormous mobilisation), their plurality, and their multiplication in different areas – end up producing significant effects in parts of the city or in the city as a whole.

UNESCO tends to consider creative (and music) cities as institutionalised centres of excellence. That also applies to much of the specialised literature on this set of topics (Bradford, 2004; Florida, 2002 and 2005; Hartley, 2005; Howkins, 2001 and 2009; Landry, 2006; Landry & Bianchini, 2000; Lerner, 2009; Reis, 2008, 2010 and 2012; Reis & Kageyama, 2009; Scott, 2006; Throsby, 2001). In this sense, for the architect Charles Landry, who supposedly coined the (somewhat imprecise and controversial) concept of “creative cities” in 1995 (alongside Franco Bianchini), it would be necessary to create a structured environment that would provide conditions for the emergence of not only imagination, but also public participation.

The Creative City is a clarion call to encourage open-mindedness and imagination. It intended to have a dramatic impact on organisational culture. Its philosophy was that there is always more potential in any city than any of us think at first sight. It posits that conditions need to be created for people to think, plan and act with imagination in harnessing opportunities or solving seemingly intractable urban problems. It is a positive concept: its assumption is that ordinary people can make the extraordinary happen if given the chance. (Landry, 2009, pp. 3-34).

Therefore, although these cities may have their musical activities institutionalised (more or less supported by the state and private companies), it is also relevant to consider here the numerous spontaneous initiatives (marked by informality) developed by actors in a territory. In fact, what is generally observed in the field is that the actors seem more committed and engaged when they perceive that there is spontaneity in the initiatives (identified by them with the notion of “authenticity” and fidelity to the interests of the network of which they are part), when they effectively feel like protagonists of the activities (and that they are capable of building, through these activities, “heterotopias”¹⁰ that have vitality). The starting point here is the conviction that actors believe that it is possible to build a “way of being” and of “being-together” that is “alternative” (Maffesoli, 2009),

¹⁰ As numerous authors in the Social Sciences have already pointed out, this is not about betting on the capacity of actors to (re)construct a “utopia” or “traditional spatial utopianism” (Harvey, 2009). Therefore, the notion of “heterotopias” is used here, not exactly in the Foucaultian sense – as a set of practices, most of the time, at the service of “biopower” (Foucault, 2013) –, but more in the sense used by Lefebvre (2004 and 2015): as powerful initiatives, capable of conducting the “biopolitics of the multitude” (Hardt & Negri, 2000, 2005 and 2009). They would therefore be powerful heterotopias that transform urban life.

which Harvey called “spatio-temporal utopianism” or “dialectical utopianism” (Harvey, 2009).¹¹

Thus, in formal and informal conversations, several actors often mention a great distrust regarding the institutionalisation processes involving the creative sectors. Therefore, it is argued that these dynamics – in the field of music – are much more complex than they appear: institutionalisation and support through resources would not necessarily tend to guarantee the presence of mobilised and active actors in a location. Although the axioms that guide this work coincide with some of UNESCO’s postulates regarding this topic, it is assumed that it is the actors (in everyday life) who effectively (re) construct – with or without institutional support – a “city of music”.

Another aspect repeatedly highlighted by local actors in interviews conducted over the years is that the fact that the government decides that a given city will henceforth be a creative territory dedicated especially to a sector of cultural production (amongst the seven areas defined by UNESCO) can also have negative effects, hampering or even limiting some dynamics of the cities in areas of activity not considered to be priorities and/or strategic.¹² It is important to warn the reader that cities renew themselves over time, especially in their off-line (alternative) circuits – the trajectories of cities are also marked by “serendipity” (Vivant, 2012) –, and that, often, these territories

¹¹ Although we do not entirely agree with the arguments proposed by Harvey (2009), his perspective is interesting for the purposes of this research, as it values the transformative action of actors on the territory (on space-time relations and dynamics).

¹² Despite complaints from actors about being often overlooked by public policies implemented in their respective cities, Souza, in his studies of all Brazilian cities awarded UNESCO seals, makes a relevant and somewhat surprising observation: “it was not necessarily identified [...] the engagement of actions specifically aimed at the areas for which UNESCO endorsed these cities [...] (what was observed) were development actions that seek in some way to contemplate various languages and lines of action” (Souza, 2020, p. 26).

have more than one relevant creative sector, which should be equally supported by public policies.

In fact, it is worth noting that the processes involving UNESCO designations and their technical evaluations are also somewhat relativised as an important reference for the research that was undertaken and that resulted in the reflections and arguments recorded in this book. In this sense, it is worth emphasising that another relevant hypothesis that guided our reflections is also a strong indication of this: especially when we postulate that the four cities studied are to some extent “musical” or that they have a certain territorial vocation relevant to music. It is important to remember that, even though the city of Paraty was considered a creative city in the gastronomy category and, at the same time, Rio das Ostras was not considered a creative city by this international organisation¹³, both of them – despite the numerous challenges faced in their territories – continued to be considered here as cities with significant musical production networks.

In the research completed with the creative cities of Brazil that were awarded the UNESCO designation, Ferreira (2017) highlights not only that many creative cities failed to fill out the forms properly and support their candidacy properly with the international organisation, but also that the candidacy process is generally arbitrary, decided by the technocracy and local powers (and, therefore, many cities may have more than one powerful cultural production chain, that is, they may have several expressive creative production sectors):

Through the experience of Brazilian cities, it was possible to see that the process for obtaining UNESCO’s approval is always very similar, and that applications are often submitted with

¹³ As we will discuss in chapter 5, the city of Rio das Ostras had its candidacy for creative city (of Music) denied by UNESCO in 2021.

many technical obstacles (many cities fail to complete their applications at this stage of filling out the form) [...]. The initiative almost always comes from the city government and there is no defined criterion for choosing a specific cultural category, but it is certainly the one that best fits the application form; the one that fits in with the current and future public development policies of the city; and that will also grant it greater visibility on the global network [...]. This means that Salvador (which has the music designation) could be recognised as the creative city of gastronomy, due to its cuisine with distinctive flavours and dishes of African origin [...]. Likewise, Belém (which has the gastronomy designation), with its notable crafts of indigenous origin represented by ceramics, basketry, wooden objects, shells and gourds [...] and also Florianópolis (which also has the gastronomy designation), with its manufacturing production linked to the Azorean tradition with bobbin lace, ceramic pots, jars and jugs, baskets and hampers made of straw; [...] they could also be recognised as creative cities of crafts and folk art (Ferreira, 2017, p. 141).

More than the construction of a creative territory, the initiatives of local authorities produce an image and an imaginary of a globalised city prepared to compete in an increasingly immaterial economy, which largely values experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 2001). In countless initiatives of this type, it is possible to attest that politicians and authorities often profess to different sectors of society that they are building a creative city, but often what we see is the implementation of a set of territorial marketing strategies. In analysing the planning and interventions implemented in these cities, we see that the processes are exogenous and operate based on a *mimetic* (models of supposedly successful metropolises are copied) and *ostentatious* logic (value is given not only to everything that may be excessively spectacular or capable of producing synergies with territorial branding, but also to

mega projects and the construction of large urban facilities), being capable of attracting tourists and investments that ultimately aim to enrich investors and specific political groups (the objectives are financial and concerned with growing the urban machine).¹⁴ Thus, we often identify the use of cultural initiatives involving the holding of mega media events as part of these city marketing strategies; the use of iconic architecture and projects in strategic locations in the region; the development of actions that prioritise attracting tourists and investments to the location; and the conduction of processes of exclusion and gentrification of areas of interest to big capital.

There is literature – especially anglophone (Bennett *et al.*, 2014; Wynn, 2015) – that considers that the moment of organising and holding mega-events and festivals, as an event that brings together actors from different social segments (and produces synergies between more or less organised groups, businesspeople, and the state), could leverage not only local development, but also a “cosmopolitan society” (Beck, 2006) (and even establish more “intercultural” relations in a territory). Now, without entirely disagreeing with this literature, what the fieldwork in these cities indicated is that this occasionally happens in some cities, but there are processes and developments that go in other directions and that require more critical and rigorous reflection. Therefore, it is also necessary to acknowledge that there are processes of “festivalization of a city” (Bennett *et al.*, 2014), which result in

¹⁴ According to Reis (2012, pp. 80-81), unlike in creative cities, the processes are constructed in an endogenous and democratic way, valuing the existing culture; that is, the singularities of each territory. In these cities, the objectives are to articulate the economic, environmental, cultural, and social aspects in the most harmonious way possible so that the beneficiaries are effectively broad sectors of society in that territory. Unlike the “(mega) project logic” that characterises the dynamics of city marketing, the creative city is seen as an ongoing process that ultimately attracts tourists and investors – but this would be a consequence and not exactly the final objective outlined.

exclusionary projects (generally aimed at tourism and the economic elite) – of gentrification and exclusion of the poorest population that sees its “right to the city” denied. Thus, many times, over significant periods of time (in everyday life), localities have been established as creative cities through initiatives involving artists, fan networks, and entrepreneurs, without going directly or indirectly through effective support or interventions carried out by the public authorities.

We would like to underline that, when we refer to “cities of music”, we refer especially to activities that revolve around live music, which currently represents approximately 70% of artists’ earnings in the segment. Without underestimating in any way the relevance of the sale of physical and digital phonograms, which represent 80% of the music market’s revenues (according to data released by the recording industry), it is also necessary to acknowledge the direct and indirect importance today of live concerts and festivals for countless actors: for musicians, for the generation of thousands of direct and indirect jobs, and for the dynamism of cities (as well as the relevance for the development of branding or territorial marketing strategies).

1.4 Fieldwork in cities with powerful productive musical plots

Although the state of Rio de Janeiro is a hotbed of musical and audiovisual production in Brazil, for a long time, the government has relied on oil royalties as the backbone of economic and social growth in the region.¹⁵

¹⁵ At the time this book was being written, Brazil was experiencing economic stagnation, partly due to the fluctuation in the price of a barrel of oil on the global market, and to a broad political and institutional crisis that the country had been experiencing since the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff.

In recent years, discussions on creative economies and cities have gained ground within the local technocracy, but an extractive-industrial logic still reigns in the macro-region. The pioneering effort in the construction of data on the creative productive sectors in the country was made by Prestes Filho & Cavalcanti (2002), who identified fundamental vectors for the development of Rio de Janeiro in the chains of the cultural economy; and that prepared by the Federation of Industries of Rio de Janeiro (Firjan) in the report entitled “Mapping the Creative Industry in Brazil” – in a more structured way and with continuous monitoring –, the first edition of which was published in 2008 and the last in 2019 (Firjan, 2008 and 2019). In fact, in the second decade of the 21st century, several academic works dedicated to the creative economy were published, analysing different case studies in the Brazilian context, such as Barbalho *et al.* (2011), Jesus & Kamlot (2016), Figueiredo *et al.* (2017), Figueiredo & Jesus (2017), Fernandes & Herschmann (2018), Valiati & Moller (2016), Guilherme (2017), to name a few. Unfortunately, as far as the state’s main metropolis is concerned, the focus, for now, is on holding almost exclusively mega-events and implementing some urban beautification interventions that have been excluding a large part of the population and deepening social differences, in addition to building an attractive location focused on elitist tourism and entertainment. Reports of disrespect for civil rights involving expropriations, corruption involving construction companies, and favouritism from large national and international economic groups took over the news and social media, categorically discrediting the thesis that investments made in this city are aimed at the common good and will, therefore, leave relevant social legacies (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014). Clearly, the case study of the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro is highly complex and involves numerous production chains that operate in a more or less integrated manner. In the music sector, it involves activities carried

out in public and private spaces; paid and free; through concerts, parties and festivals; with or without state support.

Given the difficulty in developing a study on the city of Rio de Janeiro as a whole, in this publication we chose to analyse what has been happening in the daily life in recent years in the Port Zone region of the capital; this is a location in which the city government has been investing significantly at the beginning of the 21st century as a strategic and iconic area of the project to convert the city into a creative territory. Initially named as “*Porto Maravilha*” (“Wonderful Port”), we consider it quite significant that, during the work that preceded the Rio Olympics, the city government announced in 2015 the creation of a “Port Creative District”.¹⁶ In 2022, the city government tried to increase local dynamism (and reverse the feeling of “empty shells” that is so prominent in the area), attracting high-tech companies, and granting a reduction in local taxes for businesses that would set up in this area, renaming it “*Hub Porto Maravalley*”. Therefore, by the name of “*Porto Maravilha*”, then “Port Creative District”, and, finally, “*Hub Porto Maravalley*”: what stands out in this process (in which the government seeks to induce development) is that the gentrified Port Zone – which was revamped in the 2010s, inspired by the city of Barcelona when this city hosted the 1992 Olympics – has not yet achieved the expected dynamism, but it continues to occupy a somewhat central position in the set of territorial marketing strategies

¹⁶Representatives from the city government, the Urban Development Company of the Porto Region (CDURP), Firjan, Sebrae, and local artistic collectives also participated in the launch (which was held in the auditorium of the Rio Museum of Art), presenting the district project to an audience composed predominantly of members from invited companies. For more details, see: Boeckel, Cristina. *Distrito do Porto é criado para buscar negócios após a Rio 2016*. G1, Rio de Janeiro, August 12, 2015. (Available at: <<https://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/olimpiadas/rio2016/news/2015/08/porto-creative-district-is-created-to-look-for-business-after-rio-2016.html>>, accessed: July 30, 2022).

that have been implemented so far in the city by the city government (hence our option to delimit the empirical study in Rio de Janeiro to this location).¹⁷

Interestingly, to this day, the investment in large cultural facilities and the transformative and moving potential of mega-events – including the large music and arts festivals (which began to be held in the old cargo warehouses in the port area) – have not guaranteed the long-awaited resignification of this region of Rio’s city centre (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014; Fernandes & Herschmann, 2018). Investing in monumental events does not always translate into great results for the common good. On the one hand, the location has a museum designed by the renowned Spanish architect Calatrava, but, at the same time, part of the local Afro-Brazilian memory was destroyed in the process of beautifying the Port area (where there were important archaeological sites).¹⁸ Unfortunately, the case of the metropolis of

¹⁷ Although the research carried out in Rio de Janeiro (analysed in more detail in Chapter 2) focused on the Port Zone region – given the impossibility of conducting an empirical study in this vast metropolis, as well as in the other three cities studied –, it should be noted that we also researched some areas adjacent to the city centre, which continue to develop numerous relevant musical (and creative) activities, such as Praça XV, Cinelândia, and Lapa. Amongst these locations, Cinelândia has (re)acquired more prominence and cultural dynamism in recent years. For more information about this research, also check the cartography (digital platform) that was prepared by the authors of this book (<<https://www.cartografiasmusicais.com.br>>, accessed: November 29, 2022). The popularity achieved by the *Banca do André* concerts and gatherings, for example, suggests that Cinelândia is becoming more dynamic. According to André Breves: “[...] the music is incredible; it has a sensational capacity for mobilisation [...] and we have a very eclectic weekly schedule. It was a difficult journey and we built many important partnerships and alliances – after all, being on the street is not easy, but we managed to build a happy and relaxed environment where petty theft practically does not happen [...]. The fact that it is a place with easy circulation has also contributed to the success of the events” (interview with André Breves, owner of *Banca do André*, located in Cinelândia, given to the authors project on June 10, 2019).

¹⁸ On the relevance of these now-destroyed archaeological sites and the efforts to preserve this memory, see Bazila (2021).

Rio de Janeiro indicates that there is often a distance and/or tension between the “politics of the common”¹⁹ (Hardt & Negri, 2009) and public policies (even in relation to some supposedly more progressive ones) that, in general, have been implemented in the country. Thus, in researching the dynamics of “social reaggregation” of actors (Latour, 2012) – with their “tactics” and “practices” (Certeau, 1995) – what we found is that the *pièce de resistance* that has been ensuring dynamism in the region would be better symbolised by the small musical events (micro-events) organised by musicians and their fan networks – presenting them almost daily, free of charge, in the streets, squares, and alleys – in the surrounding areas, which have been regularly attracting thousands of people from all social segments. These events are not visible in the traditional media but are widely known by the public through social media. It is these small, free, and regular concerts that, to a large extent, have been attracting young people and artists to this region and have been effectively revitalising this territory. In the city of Rio de Janeiro, we are witnessing a commitment to a project to build a globalised city with a reinforced territorial branding, which does not take into account the cultural dynamics already there – the existing “cultural ecosystems” that are not particularly visible and/or institutionalised (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

Despite a certain disregard for music from the government – with the exception of the approval of the progressive and, at the same time, controversial city law on Street Artists (passed in 2012 due to much pressure from social movements and local artists) –, musical activities

¹⁹The “politics of the common” would go beyond the Welfare State (of the institutionalised world), seeking to enhance forms of conduct and subjectivation that slide from disciplinary and control mechanisms (of the factory or the post-factory, and the biopower of transnational financial capital) towards a dynamic that privileges coöperation between actors (of the multitude), the encounter of singularities, the mobilisation and relatively autonomous constitution of social life (Hardt & Negri, 2009).

carried out in private and public spaces have also played a relevant and strategic role in redefining the state of Rio de Janeiro, as can be seen, for example, in the growing and resounding success of some areas of the capital's city centre that, today, house strategic hubs of the city, such as the Port Zone (especially the region of Pequena África), Lapa, and Praça XV.²⁰ These cases are relevant, generating socio-economic benefits for these places (significantly boosting local businesses for years), attracting large numbers of visitors, and bringing together a large number of cultural and tourist activities that are fundamental to the sustainability of this metropolis (Herschmann, 2007 and 2010).²¹

Having received major state investments in its renovation at the beginning of the 21st century and planned as a region also focused on high technology, the Port Zone (which offers a 2% reduction in taxes for companies set up there) – the focus of our study in this city – has consolidated itself, despite some difficulties, as an important cultural and creative hub in the city.

In fact, the region, which was initially named “*Porto Maravilha*” by the city government, is now home to several museums (such as the Museum of Tomorrow, the Rio Museum of Art, and the Museum of

²⁰The best-known case studies of the city centre are, without a doubt, the neighbourhoods of Lapa and Praça XV, which, since the last decade of the 20th century, have become important entertainment hubs in the city. Structured by actors – artists, owners of entertainment venues, and cultural producers – and with little participation and/or investment from the state, it is worth noting that, through its network of entrepreneurs, circuits and scenes dedicated to more traditional and popular genres were organized in these locations, attracting large audiences on a regular basis (Herschmann, 2007; Fernandes, 2011).

²¹Furthermore, in the last decade, spontaneous “engaged” practices have been gaining prominence, forms of “musical activism” that structure (although provisionally) “sonic” or “acoustic” territorialities (Labelle, 2010) – not necessarily organised by professionals from the mainstream or the so-called independent music sector – that have been (re) enhancing the sociability of strategic territories in Rio’s city centre, running the risk, cyclically, of “devaluation”, as the last hundred years of this city’s history suggests (Herschmann, 2007).

Afro-Brazilian History and Culture), the *AcquaRio*, the *Roda Gigante do Rio*, and warehouses such as *Utopia* and *Pier Mauá*, which hold fairs, festivals, exhibitions, and important cultural events. As we will see in Chapter 2, the port area is home to other important initiatives – with less media visibility but great popularity – dedicated especially to gastronomy and live music, such as the locations of Largo da Prainha, Pedra do Sal, and Praça Harmonia.

Thus, after expensive cultural equipment was installed in the area (which has not yet achieved the expected results), the city government – since the Covid-19 pandemic waned off – played another “trick” by launching and encouraging the creation of a hub for tech companies of various sizes: this area was even renamed “*Hub Porto Maravalley*”.²² According to the city secretary for Economic Development, Innovation, and Simplification, Francisco Bulhões, the “*Hub Porto Maravalley* project would be something like Rio’s Silicon Valley and is an offshoot of the Port Creative District project [created in 2015] [...]: the objective is to attract large big techs, start-ups, and research centres to the heart of Rio’s port area [...] without a doubt, it will be one of the main vectors of Rio’s economic development”.²³

²² In this sense, on May 31, 2022, the city government officially announced the creation of the “*Hub Porto Maravalley*” project (inspired by Silicon Valley) with the aim of creating a hub for startups, technology and education companies in the Port Zone of Rio. For more details, see: *Invest.Rio. Empresas de Tecnologia apostam na região do Porto. O Globo*, Rio de Janeiro, May 28, 2022. (Available at: <<https://oglobo.globo.com/>>, accessed: August 1, 2022); and Barros, Walter. *Rio de Janeiro lança projeto Hub Porto Maravalley e quer se transformar em capital da inovação tecnológica do Brasil. Cointelegraph Brazil*. Rio de Janeiro, June 3, 2022. (Available at: <<https://cointelegraph.com.br/news/rio-de-janeiro-launches-porto-mara-valley-project-and-wants-to-become-brazils-capital-of-technological-innovatio>>, accessed: August 1, 2022).

²³ Interview: Secretário Chicão Bulhões que fala sobre os pilares que projetam um Rio mais forte. *Conexão Fluminense*, Rio de Janeiro, March 17, 2022 (Available at: <<https://conexaofluminense.com.br/entrevista-chicao-bulhoes-rio-mais-forte>>, accessed: August 1, 2022).

As we will discuss in the next chapter, despite the discontinuous public policies implemented in this location, the recurring “sonic-musical territorialities” of micro-events constructed by the actors and their collectives and networks in everyday life are what have so far guaranteed the Port Zone a certain dynamism that is relevant to this territory, especially in a context of crisis.

In addition to the state capital, the discussions herein parsed out cover smaller cities in this macro-region, some of which with significant successful cycles (which will be analysed in detail in chapters, 3, 4, and 5).

Thus, for many years, small tourist cities, such as Paraty, Conservatória, and Rio das Ostras, have been experiencing cycles of socio-economic growth and have achieved these results due to the musical activities carried out there (which revolve around “musical genres” [Negus, 2005] that are important in the national context); that is, these are, to a large extent, responsible for the levels of development achieved²⁴ in these small cities. In other words, in the cities investigated, the importance of such activities in redefining these cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro has been observed. These case studies are considered especially relevant, as their social contexts indicate the construction of development alternatives and some of the major challenges currently facing cities of music (and, in general, creative cities in Brazil).

The district of Conservatória is a rare case study, as it has achieved great success for over 70 years. In fact, its success is driven by the activism of elderly amateur musicians who head to this location every weekend to sing *serestas* in a nomadic manner, through the streets of the small and charming village. These highly engaged “activists”

²⁴For more details, see Firjan’s city mapping: <<http://www.firjan.com.br/EconomiaCriativa/pages/default.aspx>>. Accessed: December 15, 2022.

dedicate themselves religiously to the activity without seeking any type of financial compensation, despite the initiative generating countless direct and indirect benefits for hotel, bar, and restaurant owners. Analysing the history of the locality shows that it was the *Seresteiro* Movement that greatly contributed to the city's current "profile". From the 1960s onwards, the most frequent performance of *serestas* and serenades as well the creation of the Museum of *Seresta* and Serenade (as a traditional meeting point for the movement) are highlighted by social actors as historical milestones in the strengthening of this musical movement. In addition to that, several of the interviewees point out that it was also during this period that the memory of *serestas* took over the streets of Conservatória, with the project "*Conservatória, em toda casa uma canção*" ("Conservatório, a song in every home"), when signs alluding to the songs sung in the *serestas* and serenades were plastered in all the buildings in the old town. The fact remains that the village has increasingly taken on the air of a "theme park" (with houses and businesses being named after songs from the *seresteiro* repertoire; that is, the visitor will find there, for example, the *Canto Lírico* bookshop, the *Lua Branca* bakery, the *Dó-Ré-Mi* Restaurant, and so on), driven by the affection, memory, and amateurism of the *Seresteiro* Movement, attracting a large number of fans of these musical genres (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

Evidently, the success of Conservatória in recent decades attracted the interest of government technicians and consultants, who identified the location as a case in which the "culture economy" was able to leverage local development. Several technocrats began to consider Conservatória as yet another positive experience of association between local actors and entrepreneurs: similar to what has occurred in other cities around the world, widely described in the literature that analyses the trajectory of clusters, local productive arrangements, and industrial districts.

Thus, in view of the successive evaluations carried out by consultants from various development institutions, the locality of Conservatória came to be considered, at the beginning of the 21st century, as the first Local Entertainment Production Arrangement in Brazil. A Local Coordination of the “APL Project” was established, with the support especially from the government of the state of Rio, and began to develop a series of actions, such as the construction of a power plant and roads as well as the creation and diversification of an annual calendar of events – the objective of which was to increase development in the region. Despite several controversial public policies that have been implemented in the region and that seek, amongst other things, to professionalise the musical activity of *seresteiros*, Conservatória remains active and continues to be considered by attendees as the “country’s *seresta* capital” (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

The case of Rio das Ostras is perhaps the closest to what often happens in Europe and is analysed in the literature focused on the “festivalization of culture” (Bennett *et al.*, 2014), which assesses its importance for the development of territories. In fact, it is a case in which a little-known seaside town managed to boost local development (Oliveira, 2014) – especially its tourism sector – by implementing a large jazz and blues festival that has been very successful in recent decades, and which has the support of the local government. More than just boosting the region’s tourism and entertainment chains, the concerts began to significantly attract and mobilise the public in the surrounding area, due to the community-based and free nature of these events, even fostering the emergence of music scenes in this city.²⁵ The presence of these local scenes – still in the structuring

²⁵ A process to train an audience interested in jazz in the region took place. At the same time, local jazz and blues musicians and groups emerged, and several of them have already participated in some editions of the festival (Oliveira, 2014).

phase – led city officials to hastily try to secure the city’s candidacy for the City of Music designation. As we will analyse in more detail in chapter 5, despite the failure of this application with the international organisation, the process of building the UNESCO dossier was an important milestone in the exercise of maturing discussion on the connections between culture, creativity, and local development. As a consequence, in recent years, there has been a growing concern on the part of the public authorities (or at least on the part of technicians, those who support a more progressive perspective) in increasing the number of events and workshops aimed not only at fostering local culture (meeting the demands of the resort town’s population), but also at trying to incorporate more of the city’s artists and workforce into the predominant tourism model (based on large events and festivals).

The city of Paraty has managed to reposition its territorial branding, entering the international map of major globalised events and festivals with the huge success of Flip (*Festa Literária*, which began in 2003). Today, the city hosts at least 12 major festivals (practically one for each month of the year) – three of which are amongst the most important music mega-events in the country: *Bourbon*, *Circuito SESC de Jazz*, and *Mimo*. In addition to these festivals, several other events on the city calendar use music as an important ingredient to increase the sociability of the parties and mobilise participants. The analysis of the results achieved by these festivals attests that they yield a significant increase in the tourism production chain, allowing the city to maintain an average yearly occupancy rate of 80%, figures that place it amongst those earning the most from tourism in the country.

Furthermore, in 2017 Paraty was designated a “creative city of gastronomy” (due to the excellence of local Caiçara cuisine) and a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Despite these positive aspects, in the survey we were able to confirm that the local population is very resentful of decades of exclusionary public policies, typical of small

towns. There is a chronic problem due to the lack of higher education in the region, and research points to the growth of violence amongst young people. In general, the actors in the interviews claimed that they felt as if they had no prospects there: in a way, they see the tourism chain as a kind of a “trap” (a rigged game that favours the city’s powerful businesspeople), which exhausts people and does not offer many opportunities for social advancement. For this reason, technicians linked to the Department of Culture – which brings together a large number of the city’s progressive leaders – has been trying to build new cultural facilities that could improve the local quality of life (such as libraries, cinemas, and theatres), a Professional Training Centre (to qualify the local workforce), and a Youth Coordination Office for the city (with the aim of listening to and mediating the demands of young people to ensure that their interests are considered in the city’s main institutionalised fora).

Although the Department of Culture has been trying to develop more inclusive policies, unfortunately these same technicians do not recognise a local wealth that can develop the local youth scene and also mobilise those who attend the city’s cultural life from all social segments in, for example, street circles of rhyme and hip hop or in the city’s youth parties held in hostels and alternative spaces. Unfortunately, they endorse banning professionals from the local Iphan chapter (the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute), which has prohibited these activities. What is more, the production teams that organise large musical events – such as the *Circuito SESC de Jazz* and the *Bourbon* and *Mimo* festivals – are mostly brought in from other places, making little use of the cultural production workforce that is trained at universities in the region or nearby locations. In fact, in recent years, in an attempt to territorialise these free events, the city government has required not only that the producers of these mega-events offer workshops, courses, and lectures for the local pop-

ulation, but also, whenever possible, that these festivals absorb artists from the region on smaller or alternative stages.

The effort made in this book required more than a Herculean effort to study and systematise a huge volume of information, data, and narratives; it also required the development of critical reflections on a set of highly relevant and current topics, which have significant direct and indirect implications for these territories. Given all of that, there is still a lack of more progressive and democratic policies capable of contributing to the dynamization of musical vocations found in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Despite the limitations and mistakes of the public policies implemented, this macro-region has, in some cities, highly vital musical networks and cultures, which often promote not only virtuous socioeconomic cycles, but also associative dynamics between different actors and local leaders (Fernandes & Herschmann, 2018).

2. Rio de Janeiro - reinvention and re-existence

*São Sebastião of an arrowed Rio
Shot across its chest
With the arrows of its children
May God grant that its boys
Find the path amongst its tracks
Inspired by the beauty of its green and indigo
And be worthy of Brazil's flagship city [...]
São Sebastião
Your pink city
Made prose into a beautiful samba by Noel
Were I Gardel, I would sing a tango
For the many charms of Isabel
Oh my São Tomé should anyone doubt
Let them look at Urca and Sumaré
Where Imperatriz kissed the flower
Flag bearer of the happiest city [...]
(excerpt from samba song "São Sebastião",
written by Mart'nália)*

Since 1960, when the city stopped being the country's federal capital (transferred to Brasília), there has been much talk about the decline and "crises" of the city of Rio de Janeiro. Although relevant to understand this whole debate about the difficulties of this macro-region – which involves numerous factors, such as: a) the departure of companies/capitals and public institutions from the territory; b) gradual loss of prestige of the region in relation to other big Brazilian cities (which have reached more expressive levels of development than

Rio in recent decades); c) widespread corruption in public government and administrations marked by austerity or the implementation of neoliberal measures (Vainer, 2013 and 2014; Maricato, 2014) –, this book is dedicated to analysing especially the recent trajectory of the city throughout the last mandates (of mayors Eduardo Paes and Marcelo Crivella) in terms of public policies and urban planning implemented between 2012 and 2022.

What is interesting about this period is that the city fluctuates significantly – over a period of ten years – between a context of abundance of resources (large amounts of public investment due to the hosting of the 2016 Olympics and the 2014 World Cup) in which some more progressive public policies and initiatives were in place, seeking to reposition the city in the globalised world as a friendly and “creative” location, attracting investment and tourism; and, soon after, one in which a very different environment was created, marked not only by the scarcity of public resources, but also by the implementation of conservative (exclusionary and repressive) policies, as well as a lack of any debate on collective projects of public interest.

2.1 The importance of studying Rio’s street cultures in a context of appreciation of and investment in mega-events²⁶

Traditional and social media have been inundated by statements and content interpreting in very different ways, almost from a dichotomous perspective, the transformations taking place in Rio de Janeiro in recent years due to a set of state interventions in public spaces. On the one hand, we find articles praising these changes:

²⁶ An abridged version of this portion of the chapter was published in Herschmann & Fernandes (2016).

The bucolic neighbourhood of Gamboa, in the Port Zone of Rio, is once again receiving investment and a strong tourist appeal. The *Porto Maravilha* project, with the mission of preparing the city to host major world events, is largely responsible for the rebirth of Gamboa [...]. The city government of Rio is working at full steam in the Port Zone to revitalise the neighbourhood [...].²⁷

On the other hand, it is possible to identify several narratives denouncing traditional media's silence in relation to a range of authoritarian processes and social exclusion, which, for some actors, establishes a kind of "state of exception" (Vainer, 2013) in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

Investments in the (re)construction of stadiums costing billions, whilst schools and basic healthcare equipment are lacking; public works in areas of the city chosen to remove the largest number of poor people and ensure the greatest private real-estate gains; environmental crimes committed under the guise of urgency; huge spending on urban mobility works, directed to already privileged areas of the cities – these were some of the greatest "legacies" of mega-events [...]. New laws, public bodies, tax benefits constituted a new sphere of institutionality directed at the business of mega events. Private benefits were favoured over the public, openly violating the principle of impersonality, universality, and public notice of the law and acts of the public administration in what we call the establishment of a "city of exception" (*Comitê Popular Rio – World Cup and Olympics*, 2013).

²⁷ Freitas, Claudia. *Porto Maravilha. Jornal do Brasil, Caderno Rio*. July 13, 2015. (Available at: <<http://www.jb.com.br/rio/noticias/2015/02/22/porto-maravilha-corte-de-arvores-provoca-indignacao-nos-moradores-da-gamboa>>. Accessed: July 18, 2015).

How can we understand the tensions and conflicts surrounding discussions about the investments made in the city of Rio de Janeiro to prepare it to host “mega-events”²⁸ and characterise it as a globalised megalopolis? What are the possible consequences that will be generated by these public policies in a metropolis with an extremely dynamic cultural life and so many serious social problems?

As is well known, after a long and slow period of socioeconomic, political, and cultural decline, the city of Rio de Janeiro has been reacquiring a leading role in the national scene in recent years, especially in the cultural sphere. The state has sought to reverse this situation by attracting investment: investing in city marketing strategies (very much in vogue today) and in transforming the city into a more globalised location, which should forcibly concentrate mega-events (in sports and culture, such as the World Cup, the Olympics, *ArtRio* fairs, and editions of *Rock in Rio*). At the same time, there have been tensions and conflicts in recent years in which many actors have sought to take to the streets to denounce the exclusionary dimension of the “city project” in progress: according to them, the construction of *Porto Maravilha*, the Olympic Village, and even the *Hub Porto Maravalley* were imposed on the population and are of particular interest to the business world – therefore, from the perspective of numerous actors and some experts, the argument that these projects meet collective demands of the local population would be questionable.

So, based on the analysis of mega-events and on the survey of artistic initiatives regularly taking place in public spaces in the city

²⁸ Some considerations are worth making with regard to the concept of events and mega-events. Contrera & Moro (2008) point out that parties (celebrations, events, and rituals) have always been a part of social life and that mega-events emerged later in the 20th century with the rise of mass culture (i.e., the condition of a mega-event is related to the number of people therewith mobilised). Vargas & Lisboa (2011) highlight the temporary and occasional condition of events, distancing them from the routine in everyday life.

of Rio de Janeiro, the aim is not only to rethink the importance of mega-events in the much-vaunted current “urban virtuous cycle”, but also to problematise the importance of some street cultural expressions (especially those revolving around music) for the construction of a more intercultural imaginary, sociability, and everyday life in this metropolis. The central assumption is that artistic expressions (organised by groups and “collectives”²⁹) held on the streets of Rio – and not the so-called “mega-events” (which require large resources and the construction of urban facilities) – represent a relevant cultural (and economic) wealth; that is, these practices that occupy public spaces in the form of “micro-events” (with little visibility³⁰ in traditional media) have been promoting, for several years, a dynamic that contributes to the expansion of democracy in this location and should therefore get more support from the state in the form of renovated public policies. In other words, the central hypothesis here is that art performed in the streets (which involves not only music, but also poetry, dance, theatre, etc.) constitutes a set of activities that engender socio-economic benefits for the city (generating jobs and contributing towards the “recovery” of degraded spaces), but also that this type of initiative contributes to the construction of a more democratic urban context in the capital of Rio de Janeiro.

The collaborative work of these actors can be considered fundamental to the construction of the city’s everyday and rich sociocultural life (in which different social segments participate, not just tourists and the economic elite). By gentrifying localities and imposing a series

²⁹Cultural collectives are understood as associations between people who perform different functions, with the common objective of developing cultural projects and/or a scene in a given location (Olivieri & Natale, 2010).

³⁰It is assumed that contemporary society, in general, is characterised by the omnipresence of the logic of “spectacle” and “high visibility”, having been used not only by capital, but also to carry out micropolitics and dissent (for more details, see Herschmann, 2005).

of regulatory and repressive dynamics (such as the “shock of order”, a slogan widely used by the media to describe this type of government intervention) in different public spaces in the city, the state may be seriously damaging the more fluid urban functioning that allows for powerful and inclusive coexistence to take place more fully in the city of Rio de Janeiro. However, it is impossible to assess the impact that this will have on the environment and urban ecology, since the interventions are carried out and daily life is reinvented through these artists’ “cunning” (De Certeau, 1995). In other words, artists and their networks never stop “pollinating” (Moulier-Boutang, 2010), establishing new ways of occupying the city. As Richard Rigueti, leader of the *Off-Sina* theatre group – which has been working in Rio’s public spaces for over 25 years – suggests, street artists are not fooled by the achievements made by the Public Art movement and permanent forum, and are aware of the risk of setbacks:

Street art is like organic food, which is free of pesticides. It does not exist on a large scale, but it fulfils its social role. Organic produce may not be beautiful or spectacular, but we know that it is good for society. Mega-events, on the other hand, are those cultural foods full of pesticides that may even alleviate hunger a little, but, over time, they harm society and cause disease. Mega-events are yet another result of the private appropriation of what belongs to the public [...]. We have managed to make some progress in achieving certain goals – such as the Street Artists’ Law and the expansion of less bureaucratic public notices –, thanks to the actions of the Public Art movement, but we are aware that there are risks with the transformation of Rio de Janeiro into a globalised city of major events. There is a risk that pesticides will completely contaminate the soil and that the achievements will be lost. [...] We are not against what is happening; we want to propose an alternative that takes into account the population (especially those in underprivi-

leged areas) and not just the tourists and the city's wealthy individuals [...] In any case, regardless of what may happen in the coming years, I can say – without fear – that we, public artists, especially those who have been on the road for a long time, have seen a lot and even know how to survive submerged and invisible in the city. After all, to a large extent, our work has developed in this way: it has achieved significant results and built a strong cultural tradition in this city [...].³¹

We could go as far as to say that organised art in the streets creates an environment that allows an “ecological sensibility” to emerge (enabling the emergence of a “sensible ecosophy”, a more integrated and holistic posture and knowledge, which articulates reason and emotion/affection, human species and nature)³² that is widespread in social life and in the urban fabric of Rio de Janeiro.³³

From music to art collectives occupying Rio's public spaces

During the previous research conducted on music played in the streets, it was also possible to observe that these “aesthetic and collective experiences” (Rancière, 2004) organised in Rio's public spaces have been constructing more or less temporary territorialities, due to their regularity, and promoting a series of direct and indirect local benefits for the territory (even allowing the increase of local socioeconomic activities). In fact, as some authors suggest, these

³¹ Interview with Richard Riguetti, leader and clown of the *Off-Sina* group, given to the authors on July 6, 2015.

³² See Maffesoli, 2010 and 2014.

³³ The presence of “carioca street culture” – mentioned repeatedly by actors in their statements – continues to transform public spaces into “places” (Santos, 2002). In order to understand the meaning and the relevance of these places, our research went back to these spaces, privileging the sensible and intelligible relationships and practices carried out by actors.

arrangements are relevant because they reconfigure the territories in some way, and generate new “multiterritorial” (Haesbert, 2010) cartographies of the city.

Given the cultural and political relevance of the artistic expressions found in the streets of this metropolis (although they do not have the same capacity for social mobilisation as musical concerts), we decided to broaden the scope of the *corpus* investigated, carrying out not only a survey of artistic initiatives (especially theatre, poetry, circus, music, visual arts, and dance) that are organised by collectives, groups, and social networks active in the city of Rio de Janeiro, but also some semi-structured interviews with prominent leaders who participate in this cultural universe, for example: in the Public Art movement, others who were decisive in the approval of the “Street Artist’s Law”, or even actors who propose a more direct “dissensus” (Rancière, 1996) on the part of artists in relation to the institutionalised order. In general, all these groups attempt to act critically against the large-scale interventions that tend to “dignify spaces” and prepare this city for the “redemptive departure” from investments in mega-events.

The controversies surrounding mega-events therefore offer a valuable opportunity to understand the lines of conflict that currently run through Rio. In a sense, we can say that the fate of Rio de Janeiro for the coming years seems to have already been mapped out by the authorities: the city must transform itself into a “creative” city through mega-events.³⁴ At the same time, we are witnessing a delicate moment in Brazilian democracy, with an explosion of polarisations,

³⁴The concept of “creative industry” is rather imprecise: it includes both the production and circulation of creative and cultural goods covering architecture, arts, crafts, antiques, audiovisual, design, publishing, video games, software, fashion, music, advertising, television, theatre, and radio (for more details, see Hartley, 2005).

precariousness, and much debate surrounding them (Fernandes *et. al*, 2022). The current context of Rio de Janeiro is perhaps even more delicate within the national context.

Even before the deepening of the economic crisis, many actors in Rio were already denouncing the exclusionary dimension of the ongoing “city project”: according to them, the construction of *Porto Maravilha* and/or the Olympic Village was imposed on the population and left no legacies for the metropolis.³⁵ These statements are in line with Maricato’s analysis when considering that:

The process of assaulting national economies, with proposals for urban renovations that include major works and the relaxing of urban regulations, does not happen exclusively as a result of major events; it is one of the regular strategies of neoliberal globalisation. [...] Cities play an important role in the accumulation process in globalised capitalism, of which, in times of mega-business, urban space, infrastructure works, and buildings constitute an essential part. [...] Alongside the recoiling of social policies and the increase in unemployment, poverty, and violence, a new ideal of urban planning replaces the ideal of modernist urbanism. Deregulation, flexibilisation, and privatisation are practices that accompanied the restructuring of cities with the aim of opening up spaces for real-estate, infrastructure, and service capital. [...] Social inequality and territorial segregation are raised only rhetorically to justify more of the same works (Maricato, 2014, p. 18-20).

That way, attention is drawn to the fact that mega-events, even as a set of strategies that would promote economic and social growth

³⁵ For critiques on the urban-planning project implemented in Rio de Janeiro in recent years, see: Vainer, 2013 and 2014; Maricato, 2014; Ferreira, 2014. Likewise, see the following articles: Medina, Alessandra. *Uma disputa nada olímpica*. *Revista Veja*. São Paulo, April 2012, pp. 16-20.

in the medium-term – based on a theoretical framework that maintains that the concentration of investments in cities will produce trickle-down effects for the rest of the country – have been widely questioned since the beginning of the 1910s.³⁶

In this context, in which the state is clearly adopting the role of an orchestrator of development, Semensato (2013) wonders whether the ongoing process – by failing to acknowledge the cultural life that already exists in the city – is not promoting a major social short-circuit. In other words, the revitalisation proposals from the beginning of the last decade were already dangerous in that they denied the existing occupation of spaces by certain social groups. Based on these findings, the author highlights two criticisms:

The first refers to the creation of a city comparable to a “fantasy city”, where the scenario is artificially prepared to welcome tourists, who are an essential part of the local economy. To that end, alliances are made between the public and private sectors, giving space to the logic of the market. Furthermore, the demands of the local population are not taken as a priority when it comes to the development of public policies. The second criticism refers to a form of equalisation of spaces from which “fantasy” cities suffer. The creation of an urban scenario adapted to cultural consumption can prune existing creativity and equalise places (Semensato, 2013, p. 14).

Consequently, in the face of so much uncertainty, protests against these interventions have continued to spring up everywhere, especially amongst young people who have been participating in collectives and

³⁶ Oliveira (2011) argues that the theoretical basis of this strategy has weaknesses, as it results from the appropriation of principles and concepts that were developed in historical periods and geographic scales completely foreign to their current implementation (in the context of Rio de Janeiro).

artistic networks that operate in the streets of Rio (Ferreira, 2014; Silva, 2014). These young people have, in some way, continued to resignify the city's imaginary through the agency of art, through “artist” initiatives (Fernandes *et. al*, 2022). As Jacques points out, “city practitioners update urban projects – and urban planning itself – with their daily routines in urban spaces” (Jacques, 2012, p. 272).

Therefore, this analysis was developed with the aim of critically evaluating – to some extent – the projects to “revitalise the Port Zone”, putting other variables of analysis on the table and privileging cultural aspects. Evidently, without exhausting the debate, the objective here is to encourage reflection on the importance of the dynamics that involve “street culture”. That is, to rethink their relevance in the processes of resignification of the city of Rio de Janeiro. Thus, it is not only necessary to acknowledge that the economy of culture has promoted significant levels of local development in Rio³⁷ (Herschmann, 2007; Fernandes, 2011), but it is also necessary to emphasise that even street art – marked by informality (therefore obviously making it much more complicated to take stock of how much is generated by this set of initiatives) – constitutes a branch of cultural activity that brings relevant socioeconomic benefits to different locations. It is also worth remembering that, in the case of artistic expressions that are developed in public spaces in Rio de Janeiro, according to the 2014 census published in the report prepared by the Public Art

³⁷ Cultural activities have also played a relevant and strategic role in the redefinition of the city of Rio de Janeiro, as can be seen in the growing and resounding success of some areas of the city centre, such as Lapa and Praça XV, which, in recent years, have gravitated around musical activities. These areas – which were previously degraded and posed risks to public safety – are now home to two strategic historical, gastronomic, and cultural hubs in Rio: Lapa and Praça XV. They stand out as exemplary cases of great economic success, which attract large numbers of visitors and bring together a large number of cultural and tourist activities that are strategic for the city (Fernandes, 2011; Herschmann, 2007).

Forum, there are more than 600 street groups and collectives in this metropolis (associated with the world of theatre, dance, visual arts, graffiti, clowning, music, circus, performance art, poetry, etc.), which operate in different neighbourhoods of the city (including the North and the West Region) and which mobilise approximately half a million people per year.³⁸

In addition, many groups do not invest themselves in the strategy of negotiating with the government, as has been developed by members of the Public Art movement in recent years. As suggested by the following comment, made by Alex Topini (from the visual arts collective *Filé de Peixe*), some artists have been regularly developing work with residents of different locations in Rio (especially in poorer areas), but in a more dissident perspective in relation to the institutionalised world.

We are very wary of the idea that the city will be revitalised with mega-events, that they will generate a great legacy for the population. [...] At the same time, even if well-intended, the fact that an intervention is not engineered by big businesspeople or the government but, rather, developed by artists autonomously leads us to the conclusion that this is a risky action marked by weaknesses. This is inherent to street cultural activities. You can even negotiate your presence in the streets with the city government or the state...it doesn't matter! At any moment, they can come and stop you, tell you that it's prohibited [...]. If you pay close attention to where the city government is constantly intervening, you'll see that these are areas where there is already a great deal of economic and political interest. All this talk of revitalisation is not dissociated from an interest in

³⁸ To get an idea of the profile of street artists, groups, and collectives who registered and participated in the census organised by the Public Art Forum, see *Relatório de Arte Pública – uma política em construção*, 2014, pp. 121-122.

the economic exploitation of the territory. Oh, they revitalised Lapa and are now going to recover the area around the port? But what does that bring or what will it provide to the people of Rio? Most of them already know the answer: businesspeople making a lot of money. And only those who can afford to consume a lot are welcome. These interventions may even boost the economy, but they are not aimed at the well-being of the city's poorest population [...]. Unfortunately, public policies do not take into account the poorest people. They are aimed at serving the interests of businesspeople, tourists, and the city's wealthiest population. [...] We have already adopted a stance of greater negotiation with the state and institutions. However, there comes a time when you have to weigh everything up so that you don't let yourself be used by the government, so that you don't end up being a mere olive in the pasty of the discourse about the legacy and the revitalisation of the city. And all this for nothing, for very little in return. We realised that we don't want to lose our critical power, so today we work independently. [...] We need to be careful because it is easy for collectives to be manipulated. Because, of course, artists want to do things, but they don't have the money. So, sometimes, when someone shows up with half a dozen little flags, a convincing speech, and the funds...there is always someone who can give in. I am not judging anyone; everyone wants to make things happen, with the best of intentions. Our stance today is more critical, we want independence and to provoke, to make people think [...].³⁹

What can be seen in the cultural practices studied is that there is a type of "activism" that is quite inclusive (open to the interaction of different segments or social groups), which is still somewhat invisible

³⁹Interview with Alex Topini, visual artist and leader of the *Filé de Peixe* collective, given to the authors on July 21, 2015.

and misunderstood by researchers in the field of communication, cultural producers, public authorities, and critics. Therefore, in this set of routines and practices that revolve around public spaces, actors have found ways to finance free cultural offerings in the streets on a more or less continuous basis. There are some groups that seek sustainability in the streets (through money-in-the-hat and other strategies) and others that seek to distance themselves from what they consider to be a “market perspective and dynamic of culture”. They consider themselves “public artists” (who provide a service to the population, offering cultural life to the poorest) and, in general, finance their work through project funding from the state.

This is not really about judging street artists who, as they themselves say, “attack” public spaces and try to make a living by passing the hat, but our philosophy is different. In general, we do not pass the hat. As public artists, we occupy the streets in a way that is in agreement with society. The local community needs to understand that it is being offered access to cultural expression, that the product that is being presented in the streets is a form of public service. We are integrated and committed to the place we occupy; we are very respectful and we seek communion. We do not privatise the public as some street artists and companies do. We seek to interact with the problems of the locality [...] we identify with the public space, therefore, we are more integrated with the space we occupy than street artists in general. [...] We believe that this should be the stance of the public artist who is aware of their social role.⁴⁰

From another perspective – which “patrols” less the practices of actors working in public spaces – Miguel Maron (percussionist of the

⁴⁰ Interview with Richard Riguetti, clown and leader of *Off-Sina* group, given to the authors on July 6, 2015.

fanfare band *Os Siderais*) makes some very interesting observations not only about the “liberating” experience of performing in the streets, but also about the relevance of the enactment of the Street Artist’s Law⁴¹, passed in 2012, and about the importance of the “hat” for the sustainability of artists, despite some actors’ embarrassment about using it.

It’s really cool to see how many groups do very well by “passing the hat” in the streets [...]. But not everyone does it. Many people feel embarrassed and would rather just offer access to culture. Some manage to do that by participating in projects and in other ways. [...] In any case, for the independent musician it is an important alternative that grants autonomy. The artists decide to set up their set in that location and go for it! Of course, these musicians who “attack the places”, who decide to play here and there and organise themselves spontaneously, are much more likely to have to face the municipal guard, local residents, and the government when occupying the streets. But they face everything, showing the new Street Artist’s Law and defending their rights. In fact, the Street Artist’s Law was a very important achievement, despite it not being frequently respected.⁴²

The Street Artist’s Law is frequently mentioned extensively in the field by actors as an important milestone in the cultural history of Rio. According to Amir Haddad, an important leader in the Rio theatre and cultural scene, who played a prominent role in the negotiation and passing of this law:

⁴¹ City law n. 5429 (June 5, 2012) regulates the performance of street artists in public spaces in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

⁴² Interview with Miguel Maron, percussionist of the group *Os Siderais*, given to the authors on July 11, 2014.

It was difficult to get this law passed, but we had the support of numerous important street cultural groups and movements, especially those associated with theatre, music, visual arts, and dance. The passing of this law paves the way for the construction of a more democratic city, with possibilities for greater social inclusion, in which there can be greater access to culture for all. [...] However, many street artists have been committing excesses and invading places without negotiating. For example, they perform with loud music or sound, disturbing the communities. They do not understand that, in the streets, everyone has rights, that everyone must be respected, that it is necessary to negotiate with the local population. As I said, it was not easy to negotiate this law, in fact the city government went back on its decision and demonstrated sensitivity, realising that public art, which occupies the squares and streets, is an asset for this city, which makes Rio a special city. There is an important cultural life that takes place in the public spaces of this city. [...] We took strong arguments to the city government and managed to open new, more democratic perspectives for the city, at a time when it is becoming globalised and when there is, unfortunately, a process of rising living costs and significant social exclusion.⁴³

From the above statement, on the one hand, we see that the government often adopts a repressive stance, imposing regulations that have been widely used in recent years in several locations in Rio's city centre. On the other hand, there is an understanding (or there is a certain perception on the part of progressive sectors that operate in the state) that the cultural production that occupies public spaces can be capitalised on and incorporated as a local development strategy. However, as several music groups that occupy public spaces in a less

⁴³ Interview with Amir Haddad, leader of the *Tá na Rua* group and the Public Art Movement, given to the authors on June 25, 2014.

negotiated manner (without the support of local businesspeople and leaders) have pointed out – almost always aiming to pass the hat –, the Street Artist’s Law is not always respected by the security forces (Fernandes, Trotta & Herschmann, 2015).

The Street Artist’s Law was important, and I think the number of music groups playing in the streets of Rio has increased. When our group started playing in the city in 2012, there were almost no street artists. Of course the situation has improved a lot and the growth in the number of groups is proof of that [...]. But the police don’t always respect the law and keep demanding paperwork. We explain that this new law lifted a series of requirements to be able to perform, but they keep pushing and sometimes we have to give up playing in certain places.⁴⁴

After several interventions – many of which achieved questionable success –, a growing number of urban planners and intellectuals have posed the question as to whether cities can continue to be viewed in a generic way, using methods that produce almost “blank slates” (as several major urban reforms have done throughout modernity). That is, whether cities can be seen as a kind of “laboratory” for far-fetched projects that often fail to achieve the expected goals. Thus, although there is a prevailing conception in the globalised world about the relevance of urban reforms, a critical perception has been growing amongst actors and specialists that it is necessary to respect and take into account the memory (the historical and cultural past), the daily life, and the demands of the local population in urban-transformation or local-development projects (Jacques, 2012; Jeudy, 2014). Ultimately, it is necessary to take into account the specificities of places, the

⁴⁴ Interview with Cristian Kiffer, bass player of rock band *Dominga Petrona*, given to the authors on July 2, 2014.

social needs, and the ecology of cultural dynamics found in cities so that a city that is viable for “sharing” can be built (Durán, 2008), in a more or less balanced way.

From the case studies analysed here, we found that street art is still not taken seriously by cultural policies generally implemented in Rio. As Haddad emphasizes, “[...] releasing projects’ public notices does not solve the challenge of creating laws and public policies that are effectively more democratic and that bring development to the metropolises”.⁴⁵ Thus, street art is seen as spontaneous and transformative: to be implemented, it does not require major works, major interventions in the layout of the city’s “arteries”, or the construction of new cultural facilities. However, street-culture initiatives have little sustainability – they rely on the will of actors and often on their “cultural activism” – and could be supported by renewed public policies. Although it may not seem so at first, encouraging the creative and innovative initiatives of these street groups is economically important for Rio: not only to prevent this macro-region from becoming increasingly dependent on oil royalties, but also because these actions encourage recurrent and more democratic civic practices. In short, street culture is important for the (re)construction and/or maintenance of ecosophies in the city of Rio de Janeiro. If, on the one hand, it is true that a balanced or “wonderful” metropolis is not being built, on the other hand, these cultural practices continue to contribute significantly to the non-constitution of a “divided city” (Ventura, 1994) in this territory.

⁴⁵Interview with Amir Haddad, leader of the group *Tá na Rua* and *Movimento Arte Pública*, given to the authors on June 25, 2014.

2.2 Between the “empty shells” and the potential of urban creative dynamics in the everyday around the port of Rio⁴⁶

One of the goals of this section was to take stock of the current situation in the Port Zone after the events of the World Cup, the Olympics, and the Covid-19 pandemic. Obviously, the fluctuations in the price of a barrel of oil (and how this affected local royalties, as well as the price of petrol and diesel for consumers) have significantly contributed to worsening the situation in this territory, but they are not the only aspect to explain the current scenario of loss of dynamism in the region: public policies have had their share of responsibility in this process. The goal here is to make a brief assessment, identifying potentialities (and obstacles) in the locality – especially when it comes to the articulation with local micro-events – despite the context of a broad crisis experienced in the country in recent years.

Another assumption that guides the analysis is that this case study is capable of providing important indicators about the process of converting Rio into a “creative city” or not. Some of the questions that arise are: could it be that what we have in this territory are large, almost unnecessary urban facilities – a kind of “white elephants” – that were built as part of a project of “urban sanitation” and spectacularisation of the city, but that need to be artificially sustained from now on?⁴⁷ Could it be that the gentrification process in this location served not exactly a project to build a creative city⁴⁸ but, rather, a

⁴⁶ A preliminary version of this chapter was published in Fernandes & Herschmann, 2018.

⁴⁷ Rio de Janeiro has more than 60 cultural centres, foundations, and museums that do not know how to maintain their activities, as they get scarce public funds. Many city leaders question the construction of new museums and cultural facilities, as the government has shown itself incapable of maintaining the relevant institutions that already exist in this metropolis.

⁴⁸ The 2009-12 Strategic Plan for the city of Rio clearly highlights the importance of

major territorial marketing strategy, which, in turn, acted as a kind of “smoke screen”, making it easier for politicians, contractors, and businesspeople to embezzle a huge amount of public funds? Even if the objectives there were not only collective interests (but, rather, those of political and business groups), is it possible to appropriate this project through endogenous and inclusive plans and convert this emblematic area into a kind of “laboratory” for a new, more democratic city, capable of generating socioeconomic benefits for broader sectors of the population?

Brief history of investments and renovations in the Port of Rio

This plan to commercialise the city is a project that converts certain areas into businesses, therefore, it aims to subordinate the city to capital, and not to the interests of the people. This has a direct impact on the increase in socio-spatial inequalities that already characterise the city of Rio de Janeiro.⁴⁹

Unlike the logic that guided the urban design of the “Cultural Corridor” carried out in the last decade of the 20th century – at that time, the rhetoric of “loss of the city’s heritage” (Pio, 2014) was very present in the technocratic discourse –, which allowed the preservation of the historic architectural complex of the Lapa neighbourhood

culture in the city’s restructuring and in preparing the environment for mega-events such as the Olympics and the World Cup. The document establishes the strengthening of the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro “as a cultural reference for the country through heritage revitalisation, urban requalification, and the promotion of diversity” as the main guideline for cultural policies. Rio is also the first city in Brazil to join the Creativity World Forum.⁴⁹ Simões, Mariana. *O lado B das Olimpíadas para o Rio de Janeiro. Exame*, May 29, 2017. (Available at: <<http://exame.abril.com.br/brasil/os-jogos-da-exclusao>>. Accessed: December 1, 2022).

and its subsequent reorganisation as an important hub of the city (Herschmann, 2007); the guidelines for the reforms of the port region that were implemented in the first decades of the 21st century resumed in a certain sense (but evidently grounded on other bases⁵⁰) the imperatives of the gentrification processes that characterized the country's modern urban history (Moreira, 2004; Semensato, 2012).

More than the idea of “poor conservation”, the notion of “emptiness” plays a role in the construction of the image of the area, the urban imaginary, and the formation of a classification system of local memory. An analysis of the articles that circulated in traditional media attests the recurrence of the use of stigmatising terms by the technicians who worked in the area, frequently seen as “degraded”, “in ruins”, “falling apart” or “decadent”. As Guimarães (2011) points out, a “rhetoric of emptiness” was established, interpreting the forms of local sociability based on a specific language, in spaces discursively constructed as empty and abandoned. According to such narratives, the “problem” of the Port Zone would not be in the physical condition of the buildings, as was the case in Lapa, but rather in the “idleness” of the region, in the “ruined” spaces and in the existing “voids” (Pio, 2014).⁵¹

It is not without reason, therefore, that Mayor Eduardo Paes – who, in his two terms in office (from 2008 to 2016), carried out the current renovations in the port area – ends up identifying himself so much with Pereira Passos (Correia, 2013), a mayor from the beginning

⁵⁰ Instead of “civilisation” and “progress”, for example, slogans such as “globalisation”, “innovation”, “attracting investment”, and “territorial branding” emerge.

⁵¹ The association of Olympic commitments with the City's Sustainable Development Master Plan, approved by the mayor and councillors in 2009, and with Rio's Strategic Plan, as well as the alignment with other levels of government, were fundamental elements of this process, as they guaranteed these commitments the political-institutional basis for their implementation.

of the 20th century who became famous for the interventions carried out (inspired by the 19th-century renovations in Paris), which became known as “demolition” (due to the destruction of the colonial houses and the constructions of important avenues in Rio’s city centre).⁵² At the July 1, 2012 inauguration of the first phase of the *Porto Maravilha* project, in the renovated Cais do Valongo garden, Mayor Paes was accompanied by an actor portraying Pereira Passos.⁵³

According to the Urban Development Company of the Port Region of Rio de Janeiro (CDURP), which is directly responsible for managing this strategic area of the city, the renovation project of the Port Zone, which encompasses the neighbourhoods of Gamboa, Saúde, and Santo Cristo, was carried out with the aim of restoring the urban infrastructure, transportation, as well as the environment and the historical and cultural heritage of the port region. The renovations – which should have been completed in 2015 – included, amongst their most visible interventions, the demolition of the perimeter overpass and the transformation of the space into a pedestrian area, the construction of new avenues, the construction of underground access

⁵² Pereira Passos himself carried out interventions in the Port Zone, before Mayor Eduardo Paes. During Mayor Pereira Passos’ administration, at the beginning of the 20th century, the first large-scale maritime landfill was built with the aim of creating a central port area: the demolition of the Morro do Senado to fill 170 hectares over the sea, in front of the Livramento, Conceição, Providência, and Saúde hills. The new coastline allowed the construction of the Gamboa pier, the first pier of the modern port. At the western end of the pier, the Mangue Canal was extended, and Avenida Francisco Bicalho was created as a suture element with the old town. From Praça Mauá, at the other end of the pier, work began on Avenida Central, now Rio Branco, measuring 1,750 meters long and 22 meters wide, designed in the style of Haussmann’s boulevards, which would support the first modern buildings in present-day Rio (Andreatta et al., 2009).

⁵³ The then mayor even told the press at that time that he would like to be remembered as a “visionary” like Mayor Pereira Passos. See: *Em campanha Paes tenta vincular a sua imagem às transformações feitas por Pereira Passos. O Globo. Caderno Rio*, July 9, 2012. (Available at: <<https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/in-campaign-paes-tries-to-link-his-image-to-the-transformations-made-by-pereira-passos-5433676>>. Accessed: June 22, 2017).

tunnels, the expropriation and demolition of several historic houses in the region; in addition to creating waterfronts and boulevards (named Olímpico) and expanding squares (such as Mauá and Harmonia), carrying out improvements and urbanisation works in the micro-region's favelas, building important new cultural and entertainment facilities such as the Rio Museum of Art, the Museum of Tomorrow, and the Aquarium (AquaRio) in the area (as well as a shopping centre that is planned to be built soon in the building where the headquarters of *Moinho Fluminense* used to be); and enabling the installation of bike routes and LRT trains connecting the area to adjacent neighbourhoods in the city centre.⁵⁴

Evidently, the way in which this urban-planning project was conducted (for most, the management of the processes was conducted in an undemocratic manner) and the idea of a “social legacy” have been widely questioned by experts and city leaders. Criticism is mainly directed at the “concentrationist” perspective of the project: whether it is the centralisation of benefits in a privileged segment of society (especially business groups) or in relation to the spatial grouping of the

⁵⁴ The Urban Development Company of the Port Region of Rio de Janeiro (CDURP) was established by Complementary Law n. 102/2011 and is in charge of managing the *Porto Maravilha* Consortium Urban Operation. CDURP is responsible not only for coordinating with other public agencies (including the Porto Novo concessionaire), but also for executing works and services in the five million square metres of this area, considered of Special Urban Interest. As the manager of the operation, CDURP reports to the Securities and Exchange Commission (CVM) and participates in the approval of real-estate projects in a technical group of the City Department of Urbanism (SMU). It is also the agency responsible for making part of the land in its area available to the market. The company's responsibilities also include acting as a promoter of the economic and social dynamism of the port region, as delimited by Complementary Law n. 101 (which created the *Porto Maravilha* Urban Operation). As for Porto Novo, it is a concessionaire contracted via open tendering to carry out works and provide city public services until 2026 in this area of the city. For more details, see: <<http://www.portomaravilha.com.br/artigosdetalhes/cod/19>>. Accessed: December 1, 2022.

legacy. Since these renovations began, numerous social movements have been denouncing, amongst other things, cases of violation of housing rights, labour irregularities, hindrances to social and civic participation, lack of transparency in the reporting of accounts, and increasing inefficiency of public transportation in the area.⁵⁵

Although acknowledging that a significant portion of the population appreciated the measures to “beautify the area” and the context of economic recession in the country since 2014, especially in the state of Rio de Janeiro, what is currently found in this territory is a significant decrease in investments (in an area which was once considered strategic and emblematic in the city) under the administration of Mayor Marcelo Crivella, which has threatened several aspects of the urban project, including the security project for the historic region of the city centre, better known as “*Centro Presente*” (“Present City Centre”).

The “*Segurança Presente*” operation [of which *Centro Presente* is part] is a partnership between the Federation of Commerce of the State of Rio de Janeiro (*Fecomércio*), the city government, and the state government that is at risk. *Fecomércio* says that talks have not yet begun to continue the programme, but that it is open to negotiations. So far [...] the continuity of the *Centro Presente* contract, signed with the city government, is not guaranteed.⁵⁶

The Management of the Urban Development Company of the Port Region of Rio de Janeiro (CDURP) said it was not concerned

⁵⁵ See *Comitê Popular Rio – Copa e Olimpíadas. Dossiê Megaeventos e Violações dos Direitos Humanos no Brasil*, 2013, pp. 7-8. (Available at: <<http://rio.portalpopularda-copa.org.br/?p=2952>>. Last access: July 15, 2015).

⁵⁶ *Programa Segurança Presente está ameaçado no Rio*. *G1*, April 25, 2017. (Available at: <<http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/programa-seguranca-presente-esta-a-meacado-no-rio.ghtml>>. Accessed: December 1, 2022).

about the loss of dynamism in this area after the mega sporting events (which affected the city's daily life between 2014 and 2016):

The Port Zone will not be empty after the World Cup and the Olympics. People come to the sea, go to the Museum of Tomorrow, stroll along the Boulevard, go to the Aquarium – so you can't compare it to Porto Madeira (in Buenos Aires) and other places that weren't as successful and were left empty after they were built. Porto Maravilha won't stay like that. We have a vibrant life here with entertainment venues, warehouses, and especially the warehouses at Pier Mauá, which are wonderful. Incredible events have been held in these places throughout the year, which attract a good audience.⁵⁷

It is important to acknowledge that CDURP's commitment to the continuity of this area as a kind of "creative cluster in the city of Rio de Janeiro" was not based solely on existing cultural facilities (on activities carried out in private spaces). After all, this management body was created to manage and promote the development of the locality, including public spaces.

We set up a forum at CDURP and we regularly have several artists and groups over. We trained several professionals, such as those from *Sabores do Porto*. We went to the hills and the communities and took many people out of the informal sector. Those people who used to make *coxinha* and have their children sell them at the school gates, especially the professionals who didn't follow hygiene rules and didn't know how to handle food...we helped them to train them. We made an agreement with Sebrae and trained many people from the region. Today, these people have their own stalls in Praça Mauá and Largo da

⁵⁷ Interview with Néia Favero, special projects advisor at CDURP, given to the authors on February 7, 2017.

Prainha. Some of them took cooking classes and are now true chefs. So, here at CDURP, we have done important, grassroots work over the last six years. I constantly welcome leaders, professionals, and artists to hear their opinions and demands, which we try to meet whenever possible. Representatives of the Military Police also participate in these meetings and fora that we organise with some frequency to discuss security. We systematically support about 20 Carnaval groups in the region. Before we arrived and before the renovations in the port, this was an unviable area, in ruins. As the area was revitalised, people began to believe in it and get involved. About three years ago, CDURP organised the first Porto Maravilha Cultural Award. It was a call for proposals that helped many people move their projects forward. We train people to work in hotels and cultural centres. Not only are local hotels required to hire employees who have taken a course here, but local museums are also required to do so. The workforce at the Museum of Tomorrow, for example, is 80% made up of workers from the Port Zone region. We have supported various projects, including those in the music sector, within our budget, which is tiny: this is 3% of what CDURP collects, which is regularly reinvested in local culture. In fact, I am the one who coordinates these transfers to cultural and entertainment initiatives. Therefore, CDURP has supported music events – we are aware that they are important for the development of the region. CDURP provides the sound – of course not perfect sound, but this support is important. We also provide support with portable toilets and generators to power the events. *AcaraJazz* held jazz concerts last year that were supported by CDURP. As long as you protect the space that has been revitalised, the CDURP's role is to help groups that want to play in the streets of this region. There is a project here called *Velhos Malandros*, organised by Alexandre Nadai, which takes place in Praça da Harmonia once a month. It is a wonderful event. They play

traditional samba – I provide tables and chairs – and this is where the people from Gamboa meet to socialise.⁵⁸

Several artists and local leaders recognise that CDURP – up until its activities were drastically reduced – played an important role in fostering the training of local workers (through workshops and courses) as well as the cultural, gastronomic, and entertainment activities held in public spaces in the Port Zone. They always remember that, according to its bylaws, CDURP committed to supporting these activities with 3% of its revenue.⁵⁹ Despite recognising the value of CDURP, the actors interviewed emphasise that resources, especially after the Olympics, became increasingly scarce.

We must give credit to the institutions that came to manage this area here – Porto Novo and CDURP –, which have always supported local cultural initiatives. In fact, the *Prata Preta* group, of which I am one of the coordinators, has always managed to obtain some type of funding for its events. According to the rules, CDURP has a certain amount set aside for this purpose. However, many people have complained that CDURP's resources have been decreasing, especially after the Olympics. When the technicians are questioned about this, the responsibility has been placed on the crisis in Rio. The truth is that, after the mega-events, the flow of initiatives in the region has decreased.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Some interviewees complained that a significant part of the CDURP budget is primarily allocated to the region's major museums. Therefore, local artists would receive a small share of the annual resources available.

⁶⁰ Interview with Orlando Rey, resident of the Saúde neighbourhood and founder of the *Prata Preta* Carnival block, given to the authors on March 27, 2017.

Until 2016, CDURP helped the Pedra do Sal area with a portable toilet and other sound equipment, when it was amplified. They also created the Porto Maravilha Award, which was a great initiative and helped a lot of people. However, after a while, they stopped helping, and funds became scarce. I think it was due to the cost and the country's crisis; funding for culture must have run out, which is regrettable. The region has a vocation for culture, just look at the strength of the events that are held in Pedra do Sal and Prainha. Nowadays, we don't have any help from any government agencies, and that makes it even harder to get on with our lives and promote culture here. Looking back, I don't think that the renovations of the Port Zone and the CDURP helped the region that much: of course they made a lot of things more beautiful, but we also have to admit that a lot of people were already coming here to spend money and enjoy the cultural life of the region [...]. I think that Crivella's administration is being disastrous for the area. In the past, we still had access to several city government agencies more easily. Before, we had ties with government institutions, with Porto Novo and with CDURP, but nowadays communication is very difficult. Our requests are rarely met these days.⁶¹

Voices with little visibility in a scenario of uncertainty

In this scenario of uncertainty, we have gathered some statements below from actors, in which they analyse numerous tensions in the Port Zone regarding important issues, such as transportation, cost of living, public safety, jobs, sustainability, and cultural offerings.

⁶¹ Interview with André Peterson, owner of *Bodega da Pedra do Sal*, given to the authors on June 17, 2017.

For a long time, CDURP stated that it would invest not only in the commercial and business sector, that is, that they were concerned with also investing in the repopulation of this territory (providing housing for low-income workers) and that they had even developed some initiatives in that sense. Despite praising some positive points in the urban interventions carried out and, in the support, granted in recent years, the feeling of the residents expressed in the following statements contradicts these projections by CDURP. Several residents (and even some former residents who have now left the area) claim not only that, in many aspects, the local population has not benefited from the changes implemented there, but also that they sense that, very soon, they will be pushed out from the area as gentrification expands.

The construction work in the port has beautified and improved many things, such as the demolition of the horrible viaduct on the perimeter, but at the same time it has brutally increased the cost of living in the region. There is a lot of real-estate speculation in the area and rent has skyrocketed in the last five years. My service charges have gone up 500%; it is frightening to see what is happening. And I am in a privileged position, because I have my own flat. People can't afford to pay rent for their flats, houses, and many of the shops. There are many people who lived here for decades and have already left. I think residents have been taking little advantage of the renovations for their own benefit. Of course, it is nice to live in a place that is well-maintained and beautiful, but there are many parts of the Port Zone neighbourhoods that are not tourist attractions, especially in Saúde and Santo Cristo, and that urgently need improvements, but the promised infrastructure renovations have not been carried out.⁶²

⁶² Interview with Sylvania Silva, resident of Gamboa and member of the *Sabores do Porto* Association, given to the authors on April 15, 2017.

Many residents have always questioned the idea that the neighbourhoods of Gamboa, Santo Cristo, and Saúde were being revitalised. There was a harmonious local life, a small-town atmosphere that was lost. And because of that, I moved out from that region. The cost of living here was very cheap and suddenly became absurdly expensive. We could say the services offered here have, in a way, become posh. When this construction work began, we saw the place inevitably transform up close. Of course, if you ask the humblest resident of the region if they like Praça Mauá the way it is now, they will probably say: “of course, everything is more beautiful”. The feeling you get is that new leisure and cultural options are opening up in the region. But the price being paid is very high. Most of these attractions are not there for the enjoyment of the communities in these local neighbourhoods.

I think that, in the medium term, the Port Zone will become like Pelourinho in Salvador or a kind of Oldtown in Paraty. These are places that are maintained to serve the tourist industry. Many people will be expelled, and this will generate a feeling of revolt in the population. The city looks pretty, but it is not for the enjoyment of all social classes. The state and the businesspeople only aim for money, tourism, and real-estate speculation. No one in these communities was ever asked about what improvements they wanted or needed. The political and economic powers arrived and did what they had already planned. What kind of revitalisation is this that the state has carried out? There were already communities there with a lively everyday, full of interesting activities.⁶³

⁶³ Interview with Adrianna Eu, visual artist and former resident of Morro da Conceição, given to the authors on March 9, 2017.

Many residents not only fear not being able to keep up with the rising cost of living, but also wonder whether there will be room for local cultural traditions in the new project that has been designed for this territory.

I am one of the founders of *Cordão do Prata Preta*, which is now a well-known *bloco* [a Carnival “block”] in Rio de Janeiro. It is a medium-sized *bloco* and, obviously, people often come to talk to us to talk about culture, about the region, about Carnival here in the Port Zone. When the revitalisation project for the Port Zone took place, residents thought it would be good, after decades of profound neglect. And, a few months ago, we came to talk to a technician who was providing impact services for the implementation of this shopping centre that will be in front of Praça da Harmonia. She asked if we had any questions about it, and I made it very clear that my only question was the following: when this shopping centre is up and running, with all the facilities it will have – a food court, short-stay flats (if I’m not mistaken), things like that, will it make it difficult for the *bloco* to stay in Praça Harmonia? I don’t want to know about financing, I don’t want to know about support, I don’t want to know about anything; I want to know if it will be difficult for us to obtain the permits, which are becoming increasingly bureaucratic, to put the *bloco* in its original location. *Prata Preta’s* open-air headquarters is here in Praça da Harmonia. She obviously couldn’t answer this question, but she wrote it down, and this should be on the agenda for those people who will work in the business sector, as it concerns residents’ demands. We don’t just want money, we want to keep our space, which I think is the most at-risk issue. And, unfortunately, most of the residents still haven’t realised this; the realisation is slowly sinking in that they could be drastically and badly affected by this revitalisation process. The old *Moinho Fluminense* is going to be transformed into a shopping centre. This will be a complex with a shopping centre, residential areas, a business

area, and a restaurant area. So, for example, the *bloco* here will bring around three thousand people to an event. Will the shopping centre think this is cool? What kind of pressure can the shopping centre put on the government to try to make our licences unfeasible? We noticed this in Prainha, it is very difficult to hold an event in Prainha. A traditional *bloco* like *Escravos da Mauá* has to make an effort to be able to hold its events there. Of course, made more difficult by its proximity to the new Praça Mauá and the Bulevar Olímpico. The local population tends to be kicked out and the cultural traditions of the region are beginning to be affected. This has not yet happened drastically, but it is certainly a matter of time. In the more gentrified region of Largo da Prainha, Pedra do Sal, and Praça Mauá, it is difficult for cultural groups to obtain licences to hold events in public spaces. So, our concern regarding *Prata Preta* in Praça Harmonia is precisely this: when the shopping centre is ready, will this have any impact on the events held here? Because it is very likely that shop owners will not find it interesting to have a large number of people here passing through and having fun, with the shopping centre operating right next door.⁶⁴

The topic of poor public transport in the territory is highlighted by residents as one of the significant problems that has not only not been resolved but is also, in a way, the most precarious in the region.

Regarding transportation, the difficulty lies in getting around the inner part of the region. Buses that used to go there no longer do. All that remains is the LRT and the increase in prices of existing transportation. The LRT should be free because it is an integrated transportation method, since no one

⁶⁴ Interview with Orlando Rey, resident of Saúde and founder of the *Prata Preta* Carnival block, given to the authors on March 27, 2017.

uses the LRT to complete the entire journey to run most of their daily errands. But the authorities prefer to spend money on repression and public security, with an immense inspection structure.⁶⁵

Not only is public transportation still precarious, but residents have also lost basically all of their bus lines. The LRT passes through the surrounding area, and the LRT line has not yet opened in many parts of the Port Zone. And there is a neighbourhood that is suffering more than we are here in Saúde, which is the people of Santo Cristo. They lost their bus lines and they lost their local supermarket, which shut down. So, the neighbourhood is completely abandoned in an area considered by the government to be so important. In fact, these improvements may perhaps appear a little when the entire LRT line is operating. Most of the initiatives prioritise the Bulevar Olímpico and Praça Mauá. Santo Cristo remains under construction, somewhat forgotten. The works have had a façade effect for tourists. In the most central part of the Port Zone, which has less impact on the press, the works continue to be carried out very slowly.⁶⁶

Security issues, which are always celebrated as having been “solved” by the authorities, are seen from another point of view by local residents.

Drug trafficking has increased significantly in the region, and this is related to the presence of more money circulating in the Port Zone. There are often shootings in Sacadura Cabral, but in the museum area, there are no shootings because it is more

⁶⁵ Interview with José Gustavo, local resident, writer, reviewer, and musician of *Banda da Conceição*, given to the authors on February 21, 2017.

⁶⁶ Interview with Orlando Rey, resident of Saúde and founder of the *Prata Preta* Carnival block (“*bloco*”), given to the authors on March 27, 2017.

closely monitored. Visitors don't even know about it. When I'm here in Praça Mauá or walking along the Boulevard, we don't know about it. But I live in the less upscale part of the Port Zone, and there are shootings at seven in the morning. There are shootings at night. Drug dealers are here to sell drugs at events. And there are many concerts and activities in the area. I think there needs to be Coordination to provide more security for the residents of the region, because we live in fear.⁶⁷

The port area, on the one hand, now has a more visible public security presence, through agents from the *Centro Presente* programme and the Military Police, who concentrate and patrol around the areas of Armazéns do Pier, Praça Mauá, Aquário, Bulevar Olímpico, and Orla Conde. Really, as a priority, they have been protecting tourists and the wealthy visitors who come here. As for street vendors, for example, they are currently turning a blind eye, but that is another story. However, at the same time, several streets, alleys, and hills in the neighbourhoods of Gamboa, Saúde, and Santo Cristo remain as they were. Perhaps the situation for these residents is a little worse today because, since the middle class has started to move here, groups linked to drug trafficking have entered the region more heavily, competing for several strategic points of sale.⁶⁸

Another aspect that is often raised by local businesspeople, many of whom live in the region, is the constant presence of street vendors, who come from different parts of the city and “invade” this area:

⁶⁷ Interview with Silvania Silva, resident of Gamboa and member of the *Sabores do Porto* Association, given to the authors on April 15, 2017.

⁶⁸ Interview with Gabriel Rodrigues Catarino, member and one of the founders of the Association of Residents and Friends of the Saúde Neighbourhood, given to the authors on May 20, 2017.

We had jazz with Guga, *Baile Black*, marching bands, and even an occupation with the *Etnohaus* collective. The latter was a very cool collective that got in touch with us some time ago. We did *Cine Varal* with them, with screenings right here in the Pedra do Sal structure, and people loved it. The *Bar Bodega da Pedra do Sal* continues to support and hold some samba circles, but we stopped holding several events because we were suffering a lot of losses due to the huge number of street vendors operating here. The competition is unfair and the truth is that the Port Zone has an absurd number of street vendors. The city government and public security do little to curb the presence of these illegal vendors. Currently, we are only promoting samba on Mondays and Fridays. It is a shame, because Pedra do Sal and the region used to have more diverse activities that took up almost the whole week.⁶⁹

Our concern, as members of *Sabores do Porto*, has to do with street vendors. It's not that people can't work and look for alternatives in this time of crisis. Of course, that's not the case. They have families, but so do we. But the local shop owners who are legally registered have the cost of their stalls and the licences to occupy spaces in the streets. For street vendors, there are no such costs. So, this is unfair competition, because their cost is only the cost of the goods they bring along. In that sense, the current city government is failing: illegal trade is running rampant here. And so, shop owners feel the impact, both those who sell gourmet food from food trucks and those of us who work with more typical and regional products. In relation to the crafts or the delicacies we sell, it's always the

⁶⁹ The interviewee's statement about the dynamism of Pedra do Sal up until the Rio Olympics can be confirmed by accessing the authors' research work previously carried out in 2014 available at: <<http://www.cartografiamusicalderuadocentrodorio.com>>. Interview with André Silveira, owner of *Bodega da Pedra do Sal*, given to the authors on June 17, 2017.

same thing every day: street vendors sell for much cheaper and still parade in front of us, offering everything to potential customers. We have no way of competing with them if the city government doesn't do something about it.⁷⁰

The region's potential and ability to contribute to the consolidation and development of a creative city

With the exception of a few sporadic musical events that have taken place in Praça Mauá and Bulevar Olímpico⁷¹, cultural activities in the Port Zone are currently generally held in the private spaces of local entertainment venues, museums, the Aquarium, or in the warehouses of Pier Mauá.⁷² Tickets to visit these cultural facilities are expensive, and this has made it difficult, according to those interviewed during the research, for the city's less privileged population to access these cultural attractions.⁷³ In addition, almost all bus lines have been

⁷⁰ Interview with Silvania Silva, resident of Gamboa and member of the *Sabores do Porto* Association, given to the authors on April 15, 2017.

⁷¹ Most of them only took place during the World Cup and the Olympics. Occasionally, activities are held during New Year's Eve and Carnaval.

⁷² According to Winnie Andrade, "the Pier's primary function is the International Cruise Terminal. The area for events was a second line of action, as we identified an opportunity for the company there. In addition, we realised the city needed a space like this. We began to structure our Warehouses 2 and 3 for events and kept Warehouses 4 and 5 for the port terminal. So, Pier Mauá also works as a rental space for a variety of events. We started hosting everything, from important cultural events like ArtRio to weddings of the children of big names in the city" (interview conducted with Winnie Andrade, events coördinator at Pier Mauá, given to the authors on December 13, 2016).

⁷³ It is very common to see poor people occupying this area to go jogging and/or families who come to admire the pleasant view from the port, but they rarely enter these cultural spaces or even have the resources to consume the sandwiches and gourmet drinks from the food trucks installed there (and authorised by the city government). They end up consuming something from the street vendors who have increasingly been occupying these areas informally and/or clandestinely (which has generated tensions with local business owners and security agents).

diverted and mobility into the region has become practically reduced to the LRT (which is more expensive than regular public transport) or bike paths.

Yet, some indicated that they are willing to combine the use of the tube or bus lines (which go as far as Presidente Vargas Avenue), with a walk of around eight blocks to access some of the local cultural activities, especially the free music circles and concerts that are held in public spaces near Morro da Conceição. Most of these creative activities are concentrated in Pedra do Sal, Largo do São Francisco da Prainha, and Praça Harmonia, which have been providing a certain vitality to the locality, despite the drastic reduction in these initiatives since the Rio Olympics (held in mid-2016).

In this case, Pedra do Sal is a historic area, a meeting place for great samba musicians⁷⁴, which several decades ago was converted into an important natural amphitheatre by music collectives (not exclusively samba, but also fanfares, jazz and Black music), and where samba circles led by groups such as *Samba da Pedra do Sal*, *Mulheres da Pequena África*, and *Moça Prosa* have been held in recent years with great success. In particular, two aspects of these circles (which emerge as a trend) have drawn attention during the research: on the one hand, the frequent partnership between street vendors and musicians who perform in search for the sustainability of these activities (in the form of a percentage or fee for the musical group) and the growing interest of the public in samba circles led by women. In this sense, percussionist Wagner Santos comments:

⁷⁴ Pedra do Sal occupies a special place in the history and imagination of samba: its bars were meeting places for important musicians, such as Donga, João da Bahiana, Pixinguinha, to name a few (for more details, see Moura, 1983).

We have a good relationship with the local street vendors, who are partners and support our weekly event. Of course, we have attracted a good number of consumers to Pedra do Sal for a few years now. People from all over the city come here [...]. At the same time, we try to establish a relationship with the community from Morro da Conceição that is not just utilitarian. We even offer percussion lessons to the boys in the community [...]. In recent years, we have noticed a growing interest in groups led by women. In a way, this represents a return to the role that aunties once played in the history of samba. On the other hand, the formation of these circles is related to a feminist political agenda and a set of women's struggles and demands.⁷⁵

Regarding the growing space that women are occupying in the area, Thais Vilela – singer of the samba circle *Mulheres da Pequena África* – comments:

I believe this female protagonism is in a way a recognition, a kind of reparation for the historical role women have always had in the world of samba [...]. Of course, on the other hand, women are gaining unprecedented prominence today and we hope these circles will become more consolidated and expand even more. All of this is the result of the struggles of a movement for the recognition of our rights, which led, for example, to the officialisation of Women's Samba Day [...]. Of course, there is a lot of sexism and prejudice, but we, female samba musicians, have often been able to count on the partnership of some male samba circles. In fact, the people from the Pedra do Sal Samba Circle, a circle in which we have always participated [...] sponsored and supported the creation of the Roda das

⁷⁵ Interview with Wagner Silveira Santos, percussionist of the group *Samba da Pedra do Sal*, given to the authors on June 10, 2022.

Mulheres da Pequena África in 2021, by inviting us to occupy the “Pedra” every Saturday [...]. Currently, we organise our women’s circles regularly at Pedra do Sal and we often invite other women’s groups, such as *Moça Prosa* and *Samba que Elas Querem*, to participate in our events.⁷⁶

In Largo do São Francisco Prainha (located very close to Pedra do Sal), which also has historical and cultural relevance in the city⁷⁷, two periods were identified with somewhat distinct occupations and street music events. Initially – that is, before the urban gentrification promoted by the renovations in the port area –, the location was occupied in a similar way to Pedra do Sal, more or less spontaneously (although with authorisation from the city government): with the frequent presence of street vendors and artisans involved in musical activities. Very popular events took place there, such as *Baile Black Bom*, the *Moça Prosa* circles, or the popular rehearsals of carnival blocks, such as *Escravos da Mauá*. And a second moment, in which the gentrified area began to “inhibit” the presence of street vendors and artisans of all kinds: especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, this public space became a kind of “fiefdom” of the two main bars in the square – *Bafo da Prainha* and *Casa Porto*. Despite the controversies generated by these changes⁷⁸, the location continues to be very attrac-

⁷⁶ Interview with Thais Vilela, singer of the group *Mulheres da Pequena África*, given to the authors on July 25, 2022.

⁷⁷ Before the construction of the Port of Rio, there was a small beach called Prainha, which extended to what is now Praça Mauá. The square got this name because it was located near the Church of São Francisco da Prainha, built in 1696, on orders of Father Francisco da Motta. Throughout its history, the location has hosted several cultural and religious activities associated with Afro-Brazilian culture (Pechman, 1987).

⁷⁸ Some artists and musical groups/collectives have denounced the undue control of the public space of Largo da Prainha. This is the case of the samba musicians of *Roda Moça Prosa*: they were unable to hold their samba circles there (which were always accompanied by groups of street vendors and Afro-entrepreneurial artisan partners). For more details,

tive to the public (especially young people), as the aforementioned bars continue to promote a regular musical programming (the line-up of guest artists is planned so that they perform concerts on a platform located in the middle of the square or on the counters of these bars, usually representing musical genres such as samba, jazz, MPB, and hip hop).

In addition to these two points located in Gamboa, another location in the Port Zone that we identified in the research as having the potential to expand in terms of creative activities is the Saúde neighbourhood, especially in the surroundings of Praça Harmonia.⁷⁹ A vibrant cultural life was observed there during the field: a) not only in bars such as *Dellas*, *Café e Bar Sulista* and *Harmonia*, which have attracted young and hip bohemians from all over the city (throwing concerts and parties); b) but also the musical activities of *Cordão do Prata Preta*, *Escravos da Mauá*, and *Tremendo nos Nervos*, as well as the initiatives of the theatre company *Mistérios e Novidades* and the *Orquestra de Pernas de Pau* have achieved great popularity. All these initiatives have turned the surroundings of this square into a “cool, alternative” spot in the city, attracting especially an audience identified with the black movement and/or the LGBTQIA+ agenda. On that, Cristiane de S. Rodrigues, owner of *Bar Dellas*, comments:

see the following article: Lima, Ludmila de. *Ocupação do largo da Prainha provoca disputa entre donos de bares e grupos de mulheres sambistas*. *O Globo*. Rio de Janeiro, March 22, 2022 (Available at: <<https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/ocupacao-do-lar-go-da-prainha-provoca-disputa-entre-donos-de-bares-grupo-de-mulheres-sambistas-understand-25442588>>, accessed: August 1, 2022).

⁷⁹The square got its name from the Mercado da Harmonia, which operated there in the late 19th century. The square and the surrounding area are currently being renovated. The historic buildings worth seeing in the area include the Moinho Fluminense (made entirely of bricks, like the English industrial buildings of the 19th century) and the modernist building of the Albergue da Boa Vontade (Pechman, 1987).

I have lived in the area since I was very young [...]. I think the fact there is less urban violence in Praça Harmonia and the beautification of the port helped a lot in popularising the activities of the bars, attracting consumers from other neighbourhoods. The activities of the artistic groups that traditionally occupy the area also contributed to consolidating the presence of a middle-class audience that, especially since the end of the pandemic, have “discovered” Harmonia as an option [...], that is, a different place outside the well-known neighbourhoods in the South of Rio. These concerts and cool parties also helped to attract an LGBTQIA+ audience, who, in general, feel very comfortable here.⁸⁰

According to some of the local actors interviewed, what hinders the balanced endogenous development of this area is the slow progress of some infrastructure works and the fear that large business interests operating there (associated with the construction of shopping centres and other large projects still being considered) will override the interests of local communities.

Saúde is a very musical region, but few people know about that. A lot of creative things happen in this region. Of course, in general, Saúde, Santo Cristo, and Gamboa are very musical neighbourhoods because of their Afro-Brazilian influence. People look to Gamboa and the museum area and forget that Dolores Duran, guitarists like Dino 7 Cordas and Mão de Vaca are all from here, from the Saúde neighbourhood. Creatively occupying Praça Harmonia, we have the monthly samba circle of *Velhos Malandros*, organised by Alexandre Nadai. Plus, there are many Carnival blocks that were pioneers in bringing back street carnival in the port area and that have their headquarters

⁸⁰ Interview with Cristiane de S. Rodrigues, owner of *Bar Dellas*, given to the authors on July 27, 2022.

here. Old blocks, which had shut down their activities, resumed their programmes a few years ago. We could mention *Coração das Meninas*, *Fala Meu Louro*, and *Independente do Morro do Pinto*. We have all the activities that involve *Bloco da Prata Preta* throughout the year here. In addition to the rehearsals and the parade, a bimonthly circle is organised, which we call *Samba Honesto* here in the neighbourhood of Saúde. We also hold some specific events here in Praça Harmonia: the *Festa Junina* and Prata's anniversary, in November.⁸¹

The difficulties in promoting the local free music ecosystems – which enhance the Port Zone as a creative and democratic territory – do not stop there. One of the leaders of the group *Consciência Tranquila* and organiser of *Baile Black Bom*, Sami Brasil, lamented the difficulties in holding their events throughout the year. Whilst they were previously widely supported, since 2016, the adversities range from obtaining licences to hold their events (medium and large-scale, in areas considered strategic in the area) to the lack of public funding to finance the significant costs of holding these activities.⁸²

Traditionally, cultural occupation of the streets of Rio is a very complicated thing. Unfortunately, it is all very difficult: artists have to go through several hoops and a lot of bureaucracy. It feels like Pedra do Sal, Largo da Prainha, and Praça Harmonia

⁸¹ Interview with Orlando Rey, Saúde resident and founder of the Carnival block *Prata Preta*, given to the authors on March 27, 2017.

⁸² According to Julio Moraes, a technician at the City Department of Culture, “we are aware there is a lack of support for music groups and other artistic expressions [...]. We have helped as much as possible, with the budget available so far. This year, we are trying to map the main street cultural initiatives in the city with the help from the Pereira Passos Institute [...]. There is a great possibility that the city's funding notices, such as Local Affirmative Actions and others, will be resumed by the end of 2017 or early next year” (excerpt from an interview with Julio Moraes, coordinator of the Street Culture Workgroup of the City Department of Culture, given to the authors on June 27, 2017).

are not considered priority areas by the government. But we know that what makes Rio special are not these large museums, aquariums, and other pharaonic works, which are generally built to enrich corrupt businesspeople and politicians. What makes Rio a different city in the country is the joy of the street circles and events, which create an environment that enables encounters, exchanges, and camaraderie amongst people.⁸³

The situation of cultural initiatives in the Port Zone is quite illustrative of the situation found in the region. Unfortunately, street music and cultural activities are still not considered a priority by the cultural policies generally applied in Rio, even though this type of street demonstration is spontaneous and, to some extent, transformative of the urban experience. What is emphasised here is that this type of cultural initiative (which, in order to be implemented, does not require major works, major interventions in the layout of the city's main roads, or the construction of new cultural facilities) has little sustainability – it depends on the will of actors and, often, on their “cultural activism” (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014) – and should be supported by renewed public policies that, until very recently, stated that their goal was to turn Rio into a “globalised creative city”.⁸⁴

⁸³ Interview with Sami Brasil, singer of the group *Consciência Tranquila* and one of the founders of *Baile Black Bom*, given to the authors on May 19, 2017.

⁸⁴ On June 27, 2017, the Rio Museum of Art brought together representatives from several cities that are part of the World Network of Creative Districts, of which the city has been a member since 2010. This is the second time that this metropolis has hosted an event of this type. In 2012, the Creativity World Forum was also hosted in the port area. Five years later, with much of the major construction work in the Praça Mauá region already completed, participants in both events compared the previous and current contexts. These two events of this Network were organised in the port area by the Rio Heritage Institute (in partnership with the International Relations Coordination Office of the City of Rio and CDURP). (For more information, see: <<http://portomaravilha.com.br/noticiasdetalhe/Distritos-Criativos-mundo-%C3%BAAnem-MAR:4714>>. Accessed: December 1, 2022).

In view of what was previously stated, it is clear that there has been a loss of dynamism in the territory since mid-2016 and that this is related not only to a deepening of the economic crisis in Rio de Janeiro and the country, but also to the Covid-19 pandemic and a discontinuity of public policies implemented at the city level.

At the same time, in formal and informal conversations, several artists (from different artistic expressions) have maintained a proactive stance and almost always reveal a great mistrust in the recurring processes of institutionalisation involving the creative sectors. Many of them criticise the idea of building a “creative city”, or at least the way in which this type of project has generally been implemented in the country (De Marchi, 2014). At times, they even suggest that this is “a thing for politicians and businesspeople”⁸⁵, that many of them choose to act more autonomously (practically without public funds and/or through alternative sustainability strategies) and that they are not bothered by the invisibility of their respective niches or cultural ecosystems.

Many musicians argue that Rio is already a “city of music” – regardless of whether or not it has a UNESCO designation⁸⁶ in this category –, offering as main evidence the importance of “street music culture” throughout the year or even the gigantic size of Rio’s street Carnival.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Interview with Alex Topini, visual artist and leader of the collective *Filé de Peixe*, given to the authors on July 21, 2015.

⁸⁶ The city of Rio de Janeiro is recognised as the main hub of the music industry in the country (Herschmann, 2010). Despite that, the city of Salvador (which is another important hub) officially applied for and was awarded the “city of music” designation by UNESCO in 2016. For more details, see: *Unesco reconhece oficialmente Salvador como ‘Cidade da Música’*. *G1*, June 1, 2016. (Available at: <<http://g1.globo.com/bahia/noticia/2016/06/unesco-reconhece-oficialmente-salvador-como-cidade-da-musica.html>>).

⁸⁷ Rio’s Carnival has been generating an economy (in terms of culture and entertainment) worth over R\$800 million, generating 500,000 direct and indirect jobs (Prestes Filho,

In fact, one aspect that draws attention to Rio's trajectory in recent years is that, unlike many Brazilian and global cities, there seems to be, up until now, a lack of commitment from city authorities in applying for a UNESCO designation (several experts recognise that this territory could be successful in its candidacy, as it has several very powerful creative production chains, such as: audiovisual, music, fashion design, and gastronomy). The fact is that, despite the city having been recognised as an "urban cultural landscape" by the international organisation in 2012, Rio's leaders and politicians continue to watch several cities in the country submit their applications to UNESCO, many of which were successful. Perhaps one of the clues to better understand the stance of technicians, politicians, and local leaders regarding the lack of interest in the designations is related to the city's stance, which almost always tries to position itself as a different (and very prominent) Brazilian city, a kind of "creative capital of the country". The city's latest strategic plans suggest an intention to assert itself before the country in this exclusive condition (see the city's strategic plans for 2009-2012, 2013-16, and 2017-2020), which propose comprehensive projects such as "Rio Capital of the Creative Industry" (associated with the fashion, design, and audiovisual production chains) and "Rio Capital of Tourism" (Grand Junior, 2016).

2009). Over the last decade, the practice of street carnival in the city of Rio has continued to grow, mobilising residents and tourists. According to data released by official tourism agencies and the city government, at the beginning of this decade, the number of street carnivals in the city grew by 10% every year. Also considering the organisation's projections: in recent years, approximately 5.5 million people have paraded in the 500 street carnivals authorised by the city government. Several authorities in the tourism sector are increasingly aware that street carnival has contributed significantly to the growth of this production chain in the first months of the year. One of the most sought-after destinations for tourists during Carnival, the city of Rio has received an average of 1.2 million visitors, over 30% of whom are foreigners. With so many tourists, the occupancy rate of hotels throughout the city in the first months of the year is around 90%.

Evidently, some of these actors who play music on the streets of the Port Zone suggest that the processes are much more complex than they appear: it is not enough to name a location as a district or hub, institutionalise the events and/or support with resources (through public notices). This does not necessarily guarantee the presence of an audience and actors who are creatively active in a location. Many of them seem to identify an important ingredient in the mobilisation and activism of different groups and social segments:

I believe the culture here in the port is based on a stance of struggle, on practices of “resistance” by the local population – and not exactly on the support granted by the government. It doesn’t matter if this is a creative district or if the city of Rio has some UNESCO designation [...]. The rich local culture exists due to the willpower of those who were already in the region, acting in an organised way. Of course, many people arrived later and have been collaborating and contributing. These people help a lot, as long as they have the same mentality: as long as they are committed to valuing the history and culture of the region. In other words, as long as they are engaged in a history of struggles of the people of Rio. Incentives from the government, in general, go to large constructions and material heritage. The idea is almost always the same: let’s build large facilities in the cities, such as museums, aquariums, etc. As for the intangible heritage, that is, the cultural heritage, it has to fend for itself as best it can. It’s almost as if they were saying: you folks have to figure it out! This is a prevalent vice in public policies in Brazil: large libraries are built and then there is no money to buy books, cultural centres are built and then there is no money to hire artists...it’s all very repetitive and sad. It’s true that local groups and artists have received some support over the years, but it was never enough; that is, it never allowed artists to structure their activities in the region. These transfers for small events and local cultural initiatives came through

some public notices from the city, but today, unfortunately, they are less available. In large events, generously financed with public resources – such as those that have been taking place in Praça Mauá and Bulevar Olímpico – unfortunately, priority is generally given to hiring famous artists, all from outside the Port Zone. It’s the same old story: when there’s a lot of money, professionals from the big cultural industry are called in. When there are few resources, local people are called in, who perform for very little or even for free. Fortunately, we are already vaccinated against all that happens recurrently in the country [...]. It may get more difficult from now on, but we will not stop working. We are determined to showcase our art [...], people help each other a lot in the region and we believe that we need to collaborate to make this place a better place to live. And art can contribute to that [...].⁸⁸

Therefore, actors often suggest in their statements that it is the artists in their daily lives who effectively continue to give new meaning to the city – with or without institutional support – regardless of the urban projects outlined by this or that government administration. In short, despite the enormous financial and sustainability difficulties of their respective activities, actors do not seem to be carried away by inactivity and suggest that it is they, even in their condition of little visibility and support (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2015), who have been contributing significantly, on a daily basis, to the construction of a “city of music” that is more democratic and open to social interaction.

⁸⁸ Interview with José Gustavo, local resident, writer, and musician of *Banda da Conceição*, from Saúde, given to the authors on June 22, 2017.

2.3 Resilience, pollination, and re-existence associated with expressions of Black urban music⁸⁹

Despite some hesitation in the public policies implemented, Rio has been part of the transnational tourist circuit for many years, aspects that are evidently affecting the cultural diversity and certain more fluid and informal dynamics present in that location.⁹⁰ In addition, the process of building a less democratic regime in Brazil (with the rise in recent years of groups of politicians associated with conservative and religious sectors) has created an environment of greater social surveillance and less freedom of expression for minorities, further worsening this situation.

If we take into account, for example, the trajectory of actors directly and indirectly associated with funk, samba, hip hop, jongo, and other genres of so-called Black music⁹¹ that have historically been found in the metropolis' public spaces, the majority of these demonstrations and meetings are generally led by a poor and mix-raced local population.⁹² Or rather, it is possible to attest: on the one hand, that these occupations of urban space are organised by the initiative of Black artists who have traditionally been persecuted; and, on the

⁸⁹ A preliminary version of this section was published in Herschmann & Fernandes (2021).

⁹⁰ Some considerations about the limits of this study: a) the first is that it acknowledges the impact of the adopted neoliberal policies that, on the one hand, have been excessively facilitating the circulation of content produced by large communication and entertainment conglomerates; and which, on the other hand, have resulted in budget cuts to support and finance local production; b) and the second is that it is likewise acknowledges that new technologies have produced significant effects on access to content and cultural diversity.

⁹¹ Despite agreeing with the criticisms made of this category, we adopt and consider here as “Black music” those musical genres not only recognised by the actors as such (generally used in contrast with “white music”), but also those rhythms frequently identified with the diasporic historical processes, as per Gilroy (2001) in his seminal book *The Black Atlantic*.

⁹² Although oriented towards and producing feelings of belonging and identification associated with these ethno-racial groups (Afro-Brazilians), these events have been repeatedly welcoming different social segments.

other, that these meetings are considered relevant evidence that the city of Rio continues to be a reasonably welcoming and pleasant city to get around.⁹³

How can we interpret these cultural dynamics and the construction of such disparate imaginaries about the same metropolis? As it is commonly labelled in the media: it is a “wonderful city” and/or necessarily a point of “departure” (Ventura, 1994)? Would it be possible to rethink these dichotomous perspectives on the city? Mapping the “controversies” (Latour, 2012), the goal of this section was to rethink the role of music – in this case, “Black” music that occupies public spaces – as a vector of significant social transformations, whether on a concrete level or even in the urban imaginary.

In that sense, we start with the assumption that, by problematising the trajectory of some expressions of “Black music” (which occupy areas of Rio), it is possible to better understand the ways in which these artistic initiatives have repeatedly oscillated between criminalisation and glamorisation (artists who, in general, have built an erratic and complex trajectory, which articulates market success with an often “forbidden” condition), producing resilience, and “pollinating” the city’s everyday.

⁹³ Rio is a metropolis that has historically brought together many artists from different regions of Brazil,

^{but} it is also a city that has its own relevant geographical characteristics. Unlike most cities in the country, which are geared towards road traffic, this metropolis has a layout in several locations and neighbourhoods that encourages walking as well as a dynamic of informal exchanges between the city’s residents, in addition to having a pleasant climate that encourages outdoor activities during most of the year. Thus, the city – which is home to a significant number of musicians – has ended up developing a powerful “street music culture”, expressed especially through concerts, parties, and musical circles which have occupied the city, with more or less freedom, since the beginning of the 20th century (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

This is not, however, about building a dichotomous interpretation of the presence of Black culture in the social life of this city. On the contrary, the aim is to emphasise the complexity that overlaps processes of marginalisation and glamorisation of these cultural universes (and, consequently, their direct and indirect participants). For example, Vianna (1999) and Herschmann (2000), when analysing the trajectory of samba and Rio funk, respectively, emphasise that these genres have been positioning themselves ambiguously – on the edges and outside the mainstream (which does not mean that this type of cultural production cannot occasionally achieve success, that is, produce great social mobilisation and repercussion in the market). Thus, at the same time that the establishment offers visibility and opportunities in the market, it also persecutes and criticises the actors who are part of these musical scenes. In that sense, the concept of “resilience” is appropriated from the field of Psychology (and the Health Sciences) and used here (Taboada *et al.*, 2006) as a way of highlighting actors’ ability of “adapting” to the adversities of contemporary urban life – through “tactics” and “cunning”, thus managing to pursue interests, habits, and practices in everyday life.

That way, by sharing the “distribution of the sensible”⁹⁴ in everyday life, these small and medium-sized events (centred especially

⁹⁴For Rancière (2009), aesthetics would reveal the presence of dissent within consensual worlds, evidencing the tensions that constitute politics as a form of experience. Thus, aesthetics as the basis of politics only becomes apparent because politics is always present in issues related to divisions and borders, to a distribution (which involves, at the same time, division and sharing) of social reality in discursive forms of perception that impose limits on the communicability of the experience of those whose words are excluded from authorised forms of discourse. This text understands that the collective experiences produced in Black-music events would promote values, social codes, and worldviews (ethics), founding “communities of sense”. As Marques points out in reevaluating some of the concepts coined by Rancière: “a ‘community of sense’ would be, for the author, a community of experimentation and attempts to make realities previously unimaginable or not associated with what is considered ‘common’ appear and be perceived, but without

on samba circles) contributed to the formation of sets of narratives of urban sociocultural “reality” that are often quite disparate, giving rise to discourses that, sometimes, suggest articulations and, others, social tensions: statements that have been gaining particular visibility in the media, which indicate ambiguities in the treatment of these cultural practices.

In fact, perhaps due to its longevity in Brazilian cultural history, the musical genre of samba and its circles – organized in public and hybrid spaces⁹⁵ in the city – exemplify these ambiguities. Analysing the trajectory of samba during the First Republic confirms not only that the popular “Bahia aunties” (“*tias baianas*”) circles held in the central region (of the so-called “Little Africa”) but also the frequent participation of samba musicians celebrating the Festa da Penha were both marked by moments and contexts of strong ambiguity, in which the police apparatus sometimes tolerated the festivities, but often applied sanctions as well.

At the same time, as Sodré (1998) recalls – even though in a pre-radio era –, samba managed to gain space even amongst the elites of the time: not only having been confused with “maxixe-like dances and rhythms”⁹⁶, but also by managing to seduce revellers during carnival processions.

being incorporated, subsumed, transfigured, or normalised” (Marques, 2011).

⁹⁵ Many samba experts point out that local samba circles continue to be held, in general, in public spaces or in other spaces that are difficult to determine as either private or not. When analysing the seminal samba circles that were very popular and held in “aunties’ homes” or even those that are now taking over bars and restaurants in the city, we find that in general most of these events – past and present – take over pavements, squares, and alleys, making it difficult to clearly state where the boundaries between private and public lay. What seems to characterise these musical gatherings is mainly the idea of flow and intense circulation of actors in these spaces (Moura, 2009; Sodré, 1998).

⁹⁶ Several authors report that the prestige achieved by samba and maxixe at that time (in the valued “salons” of the then capital of the country) was associated with some successful musical tours in Paris (and other European cities), carried out in the first two decades of

The position that the genre held following the 1930 Revolution was notably ambiguous. On the one hand, for some time, samba was treated as a kind of “enemy” of Vargas’ Labour Party (due to its recurring association with the outlawed world of rascals); but, on the other, due to its enormous popularity, many initiatives incorporated it into the highly regarded culture of that time: with the legalisation and officialization of samba schools and the carnival parade in the city held by Pedro Ernesto’s government in the early 1930s; and, finally, the incentive for the creation of “patriotic and educational lyrics” in samba, broadcast on the main radio stations in the country (Matos, 1982).

Even in more recent periods, there is evidence that some well-known and prestigious artists, such as Bezerra da Silva, Candeia, or Marcelo D2, had some of their samba songs questioned and criticised for dealing with “sensitive and controversial” themes; and that large samba events and festivals continued to be incorporated as part of a set of city strategies to increase tourism, whilst several small samba circles were frequently banned in the name of preserving public order (Fernandes et al., 2015).

In this sense, the central assumption here is that, due to their great capacity for capillarity and social mobilisation, musical expressions – as “aesthetic and political manifestations” (Ranci re, 1996) – have often allowed the construction of “sonic-musical territories” (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014) that continually alter the urban rhythm, redefining everyday life, the imaginary, and, to a certain extent, the relationships between actors in the urban space, especially when they are found in public areas. What we seek to highlight here

the 20th century, which involved samba artists such as Pixinguinha and Donga (leading the *Oito Batutas*), as well as Aguinaldo Guinle, and the well-known dancers Duque and Gaby. For more details on the topic, see: Sodr , 1998.

is that, beyond the spectacular “city of mega-events” and the territorial branding, there is another very popular, submerged, and almost outsiders’ metropolis⁹⁷ that is also found in this territory’s everyday (a city that actors continue to reconstruct even in a “heterotopic” fashion⁹⁸): a city that is only peripherally incorporated into the “postcards” of this location and that revolves around micro street events mainly organised by artistic collectives that act in a recurring and significant way in the urban fabric.

Therefore, by acting on the “edges” or beyond the limits of the “regulated” metropolis (Reia *et al.*, 2018), the individuals who set the pace for the dynamics of these free micro-events (generally with characteristics that promote social inclusion) have frequently produced “dissensus” (Rancière, 1996). As objects/subjects that highlight “controversies”, actors and their small musical events that occupy Rio’s public spaces allow researchers of Actor-Network Theory⁹⁹ to open some “black boxes”: when they continue to track the actors in their itineraries and associations, “mapping” a given location (Latour, 2012; Lemos, 2013).

⁹⁷ The aim here is to emphasise the various facets of urban life in Rio, especially those that are minority but socially relevant. Groups that promote Black-music events that occupy public spaces are often labelled as having “marginal, clandestine, or deviant” behaviour (Hobsbawn, 1975; Becker, 2008), because, despite the established (and repressive) norms, regulations, and public policies, they continue to carry out certain cultural practices (even without the permits granted by the city government).

⁹⁸ The notion of heterotopias is used not exactly in the Foucaultian sense – as a set of practices, most of the time, at the service of biopower (Foucault, 2013) – and more in the sense used by Lefebvre (2004) as powerful initiatives, capable of producing “lines of flight” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1995).

⁹⁹ When the ant-researcher-cartographer (who uses Actor-Network Theory) follows the actors, that is, pursues that which is not yet stabilised, that which is not yet properly consensual, they eventually manage to open some “black boxes” in different contexts. The aim here is to carry out a “cartography of controversies” – insofar as these are rich phenomena to be observed in collective life –, exploring non-consensual themes, which are already socially stabilised. For more details, see: Lemos, 2013.

Musical re-existences in today's Rio

What follows briefly presents some recurring examples of actions of both restraint and resilience that have been taking place in recent decades. It is important to emphasise that these cultural expressions have always represented an asset of this territory, which in general has not had public policies to support its development.

The first example is the world of Rio funk. This cultural manifestation has been “demonised” in the mainstream media (and by conservative segments) for approximately three decades: not only because of its supposed association with organised crime in the city, but also because of the atmosphere generated at the events, which is generally considered excessively eroticised (and, therefore, parties have been banned due to their supposed “harmful effects” on the city’s poor youth). Based on these arguments and without alternatives from the government, most funk balls in the peripheries and favelas have been closed for several decades in Rio (Herschman, 2000).

Evidently, progressive sectors of society continue to strive to culturally legitimize funk.¹⁰⁰ In fact, at a certain point in the city’s history, these initiatives gained greater social visibility: not only because of the more democratic moment the country was experiencing (particularly at the federal level), but especially because of the great popularity of funk among youth scenes, on social media and, in general, in the market.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ At the beginning of the 21st century, Rio’s City Department of Culture came to: a) support systematic meetings with leaders of the Rio funk world; b) institute public notices aimed at supporting these cultural initiatives; c) and begin the process of valuing Rio funk as local intangible cultural heritage (Laigner, 2013).

¹⁰¹ Even with the ban on balls, Rio funk has become popular amongst young people in the 21st century. The great success – a) of *funk melody*, *funk ostentação* (more pop), and/or *funknejo* (a blend of Rio funk and *sertanejo*); b) the wide circulation of videos of *passinho* routines; c) the presence of artists at mainstream media events and mega festivals; d)

However, unlike this trend, there was a certain setback in the process of sociocultural legitimisation of funk in 2019. The most emblematic situations indicating that are: a) the arbitrary arrest for almost six months, without any evidence, of the well-known DJ Renan, who performed at *Baile da Gaiola*, the most popular in Rio (and who was nominated for the Latin Grammy in 2019); b) and the repressive action of the police apparatus in several funk balls carried out in the peripheries and favelas of Rio (such as those that still take place today in Tabajara, Pavãozinho, and Rocinha).¹⁰² In an article published in *El País* (still amidst the turmoil following the police massacre in Paraisópolis, São Paulo), journalist Gil Alessi makes the following assessment:

[...] from samba to [Rio] funk, cultural expressions of Black and peripheral origin in the country have been repressed [...] (that is,) throughout the history [of the country] these cultural expressions of Black or African origin have generally been met with violence by the authorities.¹⁰³

In addition to that example, we can mention the lack of support from the city government for holding traditional samba circles in the city's streets, which have decreased considerably in recent years. Despite all the prestige that samba has achieved with the establishment (Vianna, 1999), this cultural universe has been suffering sanctions

or even YouTube channels (such as Kondzilla) – are strong indicators of that (Sá & Cunha, 2014).

¹⁰² The most notorious incident that recently created great social commotion, however, took place in São Paulo: police action at *Baile de Paraisópolis*, which left countless people injured and killed nine innocent poor young Black attendees in the name of public order.

¹⁰³ Alessi, Gil. *Do samba ao funk, o Brasil que reprime manifestações culturais de origem negra e periférica*. *El País Brasil*, December 7, 2019. (Available at: <<https://brasil.elpais.com/sociedade/2019-12-07/do-samba-ao-funk-o-brasil-que-reprime-manifestacoes-culturais-de-origem-negra-e-periferica.html>>. Accessed: February 4, 2020).

from the government, even in its most institutionalised and profitable practices for the city. Many of the artistic collectives – active in circles such as *Samba do Ouvidor*, *Escravos da Mauá*, *Pedra do Sal*, *Samba do Trabalhador*, to name a few – that organise these initiatives complain about the difficulty not only in obtaining authorisation to hold the largest samba circles, but also in granting concessions for small structures for the events. In that sense, Eliane Costa, one of the founders of the carnival block *Escravos da Mauá*, makes the following comment:

It's very cool for us to see that we have significantly contributed to the history of street music that traditionally occupies Pequena África ["Little Africa"]. The [carnival] block *Escravos da Mauá* has a very beautiful history in the region of Gamboa and Santo Cristo, but also one of facing many difficulties and dealing with a lot of bureaucracy. Many people don't know this, but, when events are held in the street, the organisers are responsible for the audience. The group has organised many memorable events, but we are also almost activists, promoting social actions in the region [...]. It's a shame that, in general, the government isn't more of a partner, offering more support and resources to the collectives [...].¹⁰⁴

In the world of samba, what particularly caught people's attention was the way in which the city government systematically hindered the organisation of the city's official carnival under Mayor Crivella's administration: not only the organisation of street carnival, but even the media-focused parade of Rio's samba schools (both sold in the entertainment market). Although the tourism industry in this metropolis depends heavily on the annual success of carnival, the

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Eliane Costa, one of the founders of carnival block *Escravos da Mauá*, given to the authors on March 13, 2019.

financial resources to support the samba schools and street blocks have been withering significantly in recent years. In 2018, the tension between samba musicians and the government seems to have reached its peak: several traditional street groups and even the samba schools (whose parade is televised in several countries) only had their own authorisations and permits to perform in public spaces released minutes before the parade. It is important to remember that the samba schools and blocks face numerous logistical difficulties in the city, since their processions usually involve thousands of people (there are carnival blocks that can even mobilise more than a million revellers in just one procession). For many actors who perform during carnival, the mayor's motivations not to support the city's samba and carnival would be of a religious nature.¹⁰⁵

In fact, the negative effects of the intersection between politics and religion (remembering that the so-called “evangelical caucus” is in power in several cities in Brazil) have also greatly affected the performance of Jongo music circles (which we briefly mentioned as a third example). This musical genre (considered by music historians to be the “precursor” of samba in Brazilian culture) and its circles, which have a long tradition in the city, have been subject to persecution that has intensified in recent years: in numerous reports, performers point out that their events are systematically sanctioned by the public security authorities and by segments of the population with

¹⁰⁵ See the following articles on the constant tension with the city government: Moura, Carolina. *Blocos de carnaval não oficiais serão multados pela prefeitura do Rio: querem 'baderna', diz secretário*. *G1*. Rio de Janeiro, February 12, 2020 (Available at: <<https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/carnaval/blocos-de-carnaval-nao-oficiais-serao-multados-pela-prefeitura-do-rio-querem-baderna-diz-secretario-24244464>>, accessed: February 11, 2020); Rovenat, Fernanda. *'Choradeira pura', diz Crivella sobre críticas ao carnaval do Rio*. *G1*. Rio de Janeiro, March 2, 2018 (Available at: <<https://g1.globo.com/rj/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/choradeira-pura-diz-crivella-sobre-criticas-ao-carnaval-do-rio.ghtml>>, accessed: March 21, 2020).

more radical or orthodox religious orientations. The argument used by those who demand their ban is that the cultural practices of these circles would be a pretext for carrying out “black magic” practices. In other words, *jongo* – for these people – should not have any prestige or be recognised as an important manifestation of the Afro-Brazilian tradition by public cultural institutions (as occurs in many of them), since it would be a “cult” in disguise which should be “banned” in the name of public health.¹⁰⁶

And here is a final example (also characterised by persecution and glamorisation processes): that of the world of hip hop in Rio. Despite some important “achievements” in recent years¹⁰⁷, numerous members of this cultural scene not only often complain of prejudice and police violence (an aspect that makes it difficult to organise the

¹⁰⁶ Vieira, Isabela. *Produtores culturais e alunos protestam no Rio em defesa da Casa de Jongo*. Agência Brasil, January 9, 2018. (Available at: <<https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/cultura/noticia/2018-01/jongueiros-protestam-no-rio-em-defesa-de-salvaguarda-para-o-patrimonio>>. Accessed: April 24, 2020).

¹⁰⁷ Within the scope of these achievements and legitimation process, the following could be mentioned: a) the institutionalisation of a celebratory week dedicated not exclusively to hip hop (as a cultural manifestation that is part of the *Circuito Carioca de Ritmo e Poesia* [CCRP]), held annually between March 25 and 31; b) the recognition of the manifestations associated with this musical genre as part of the intangible cultural heritage of the state of Rio de Janeiro; c) and the inclusion of several hip-hop circles (which celebrate freestyle battles) as an integral and relevant part of the CCRP. In other words, hip hop achieved some local institutional recognition due to an alliance built with the city government, through mediation of the CCRP (which hosted the hip-hop circles). The CCRP is a project whose goal is to “occupy the streets by promoting gatherings of artists without recognition from the media and other instances of legitimation”, as is the case of hip hop. The CCRP (which also hosts poetry slams, rhyming circles, visual arts, theatre, etc.) has been gaining momentum, operating for some years as a forum for negotiation between street artists and the government; that is, this initiative has led to some recognition from the City Department of Culture (SMC) that the cultural circles that bring together these artists are relevant and legitimate for the cultural sector. Thus, numerous circles (including hip-hop ones) – which registered with the CCRP and the SMC – have been able to obtain authorisation to hold their events (Cura, 2019).

circles, even those with permits)¹⁰⁸, but also about the lack of more significant support from the city government for these events (such as the provision of public notices aimed at this type of event or even chemical toilets) (Silva, 2019).

The musical pollination of Rio

We must evidently acknowledge the very particular and delicate moment that we are currently experiencing in Brazilian political history, including the systematic obstruction of cultural manifestations in Rio and all over the country, which has also begun to attract the attention of the international press.¹⁰⁹

If, in general, the country's cultural manifestations that are more integrated into the mainstream have been persecuted, what can we say about those that are identified with minority segments? In recent years, music performed in the streets has been increasingly less valued as a

¹⁰⁸ Some articles that illustrate these frequent hardships faced by hip hop: Lucas, Árión. *Rodas culturais de hip hop se queixam de burocracia para realizar encontros*. O Globo. Rio de Janeiro, June 22, 2017 (Available at: <<https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/bairros/rodas-culturais-de-hip-hop-se-queixam-de-burocracia-para-realizar-encontros-21499684>>, accessed: April 29, 2020); Salinas, Mujica *et al.* *Roda Cultural da Glória acontece na porta da Delegacia após repressão da polícia*. Grito Filmes (Mídia Coletiva), September 19, 2016 (Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0AyqD0L-nA&list=PLw8fmp-6CkSJ6xs-Q17NJ0K7KPQjM98zNf>>, accessed: April 30, 2020).

¹⁰⁹ These are some of the prominent articles in the international press that illustrate the hardships faced by the country's cultural sector: Gatinois, Claire. *Au Brésil, le gouvernement Bolsonaro malmène la culture*. Le Monde, May 16, 2019 (Available at: <https://www.lemonde.fr/m-le-mag/article/2019/05/16/au-bresil-le-gouvernement-bolsonaro-mal-mene-la-culture_5462898_4500055.html>, accessed: February 3, 2020); Philipps, Tom. *Bolsonaro government attacks Oscar nominee Petra Costa as anti-Brazil activist*. The Guardian, February 4, 2020 (Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/04/bolsonaro-government-petra-costa-brazil-oscar-nominee>>, accessed: April 26, 2020); Londoño, Ernesto. *Brazil's Top Culture Official Fired Over Speech Evoking Nazi Propaganda*. New York Times, January 17, 2020 (Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/world/americas/roberto-alvim-brazil.html>>, accessed: April 28, 2020).

“local cultural treasure” by the cultural bodies of city governments. In the same vein, youth groups (which generally promote these musical events) are increasingly viewed with greater suspicion by the government (at most, these actors are considered transgressors and even criminals): this is reflected in narratives circulating in the media and the restrictive measures adopted (Dimenstein *et al.*, 2004). Therefore, with the hardening of public security policies and the lack of support for sociocultural initiatives by the population (with great difficulty in obtaining authorisation for small street events), most musical and artistic micro-events tend, over time, to become clandestine or even illegal.¹¹⁰

Several neighbourhoods in the city have been experiencing an intense gentrification process in recent years. As previously mentioned, the city is trying to reverse negative aspects of Rio’s image and attract investment, betting on territorial marketing strategies that aim to transform this city into a more globalised location, one that is more

¹¹⁰These are some examples of articles that indicate restrictive practices or the construction of an imaginary of criminalisation: Lang, Marina. *Ocupar ou não ocupar: rodas de samba e eventos de rua enfrentam restrições no Rio*. UOL Notícias, Rio de Janeiro, November 3, 2017 (Available at: <<https://noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/ultimas-noticias/2017/11/03/ocupar-ou-nao-ocupar-rodas-de-samba-e-eventos-de-rua-enfrentam-proibicoes-no-rio.htm>>, accessed: December 5, 2022); Antunes, Thiago. *Polícia Militar impede realização da roda de samba Pede Teresa*. O Dia, Rio de Janeiro, July 29, 2017 (Available at: <<https://odia.ig.com.br/rio-de-janeiro/2017-07-29/policia-militar-impede-realizacao-da-roda-de-samba-pede-teresa.html>>, accessed: December 5, 2022); Sanchez, Mônica. *Pedra do Sal é interditada e comemoração do Dia da Consciência Negra na região é prejudicada*. G1, Rio de Janeiro, November 19, 2019 (Available at: <<https://g1.globo.com/rj/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2019/11/19/pedra-do-sal-e-interditada-e-comem-oracao-do-dia-da-consciencia-negra-na-regiao-e-prejudicada.ghtml>>, accessed: December 5, 2022); *PM tenta impedir baile funk na Cidade de Deus e uma pessoa fica ferida*. O Dia, Rio de Janeiro, November 18, 2019 (Available at: <<https://odia.ig.com.br/rio-de-janeiro/2019/11/5827869-pm-tenta-impedir-baile-funk-na-cidade-de-deus-e-uma-pessoa-fica-ferida.html>>, accessed: December 5, 2022); *PM reprime bailes funk sem autorização*. A Tribuna, Rio de Janeiro, August 19, 2019 (Available at: <<https://www.tribunarj.com.br/pm-reprime-bailes-funk-sem-autorizacao-em-sao-goncalo>>, accessed: December 5, 2022).

intensely focused on entertainment and tourism. At the same time, over the last decade, we have had the opportunity to observe the growing tensions and conflicts in which numerous actors have taken to the streets to denounce the exclusive dimension of the major urban reforms implemented (Jennings *et al.*, 2014).

One of the premises of this investigation is that the “right to the city” and to leisure have been denied to the majority of Rio’s population, which is also the poorest, blackest, and mixed-race. The objective of this part of the book is to evaluate how these musical groups and their networks develop “cunning and tactics” (De Certeau, 1994) to face the prohibitions and persecutions from the government. In other words, despite everything, actors, in a resilient way, continue to promote street music and creatively “pollinate” everyday life and build important dynamics of gatherings in the city (in short, they continue to promote significant inclusive and democratic political-aesthetic experiences).

In reality, beyond the systematic persecution suffered by Black culture in the city of Rio (which is somewhat commonplace in experts’ analyses), the concepts of “resilience” and “pollination” are crucial to understanding the fundamental role of these cultural expressions that have had a trajectory marked by an ambiguous and complex movement, which simultaneously criminalises and glamorises these musical expressions in the media context (Herschmann, 2000).

At the same time, musical genres such as samba and Rio funk are amongst the most persecuted by specialised critics and the public security apparatus throughout the country’s history, expressing the interests and prejudices of elite and/or conservative sectors of the local population. The prohibitions of parties, balls, and samba circles over several decades, based on countless justifications (which curiously are never rigorously applied to actors considered “problematic” originating from the middle class), are significant evidence.

However, considering only this aspect means not taking into account other dimensions of these intertwined trajectories: the manifestations of Black culture and its protagonists mentioned in this section were also valued as cultural productions by the market¹¹¹ and by institutions (at least those run by actors with a more progressive political orientation), occupying spaces in the cultural segments of the more traditional and alternative media (at times reaching the status of fads, which spread rhythms, clothes and accessories, dances, language, and social codes and values at large). Although this may come as some surprise, when we consider the successful trajectories of artists such as Pixinguinha, Mestre Darcy Monteiro, Bezerra da Silva, MV Bill, Anitta, Karol Conká, or DJ Renan, we see that all of them had careers marked, at times, by situations of recognition¹¹² and, at others, by questioning and persecution of their work.

It is therefore highlighting the resilience of Black culture in Rio¹¹³, even in less democratic environments (whether during the *Estado Novo* period, the Military Dictatorship, or even today): the ability of these actors to continue holding events (in hybrid and public spaces) – that is, the willingness to persist in a “tactical” and “submerged” manner, the ability to adapt to the condition of clandestinity, becoming practically “invisible” to the “radar” of public policies.

¹¹¹ Even though discrimination continues to be socially present, it is undeniable that there is a larger market – including on a global scale – for so-called peripheral popular musical genres (Trotta, 2013), led by these actors.

¹¹² Evidently, the interest and great support of fans and consumers have been relevant in the legitimization processes: not only of these manifestations as local cultural heritage, but also of these artists’ careers. In a way, they achieved the status of spokespersons and/or references for segments of the Black and poor population of Rio (Herschmann, 2009).

¹¹³ Some examples of samba circles and balls of reasonable longevity in the city’s history could be mentioned here. Perhaps the most emblematic events of such resilience are *Samba do Trabalhador*, the *Rodas de Samba da Pedra do Sal*, and the *Baile Funk da Rocinha*.

In addition, actors' collaborative work has been "pollinating" (Moulier-Boutang, 2010) and updating the "practices and traditions of Rio's streets", which are fundamental to the construction of the city's rich sociocultural life.¹¹⁴ In fact, in recent years, by turning its back on Rio's pollen society – or rather, by gentrifying localities and imposing a series of dynamics of regulation and repression in different public spaces of the city –, the state has been directly and indirectly hindering the functioning of more fluid, democratic, and creative circuits in a significant way.

Interestingly, at other times, the government relies on the synergy of collaborative work in musical activism. We can take the example of Rio's street carnival, the largest popular festival in the country, which is built on the activism of the actors who consolidate Rio's street culture (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014). Akin to large transnational companies, the state appropriates the "externalities"¹¹⁵ produced by social networks in the territories (in the case of companies like Google or Facebook, the company appropriates the circulation and reach of internet users). In the case of carnival, the state (with the support of some large companies) offers only the basics (public safety agents and portable toilets along the procession route) and regulates access and circulation schedules for the carnival blocks in the city. The result is already known by most people: politicians and companies add value to their trajectory (or brand) and, in general, a virtuous cycle is created, benefiting countless actors and, in particular, those who work in the cultural circuits of tourism, gastronomy, and entertainment.

¹¹⁴ For an idea of the volume and relevance of the small musical events that occupied the city of Rio before 2016, see the digital platform (musical cartography) created by the authors (Available at <<http://www.cartografiamusicalderuadocentrodorio.com>>, accessed: December 5, 2022).

¹¹⁵ Externalities are the secondary effects generated by any activity and can be positive, when desired, or negative, when undesirable (Cocco, 2003; Moulier-Boutang, 2007).

However, unlike bees (Moulier-Boutang, 2010), artists and their networks never stop “pollinating” in a “resilient” way, establishing alternatives for occupying the city. In this sense, this is what we identified in historical sources, informal conversations with actors, and field observation¹¹⁶: these musical networks (which involve artists, cultural producers, and attendees) – even those organized by poorer actors – continue to find ways to resist (or re-exist), despite state violence: that is, they continue to self-organise in clandestine cultural gatherings with a great capacity to mobilise the city’s population. Or rather, as previously mentioned, what we notice in analysing urban history is that these micro-events are often structured in the form and dynamics of “street circles”.

In fact, one of the hypotheses that guided our research was that the “circles” (*rodas*) are fundamental to understanding the engagement of actors, the resilience and ability to pollinate of Black culture that occupies the urban fabric of Rio de Janeiro. Despite the more or less democratic regimes to which the population of the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro (past and present) is subjected, this territory has not been organised nor is it imagined in an even more segregated way due to the presence of this powerful street culture, accessible to different

¹¹⁶ Since 2012, systematic research has been carried out (with support from CNPq, FAPERJ, and CAPES) not only on street samba and jongo circles, but also on some of the city’s *bailes de charme*, funk and soul balls (here we express our gratitude to these research funding agencies for their valuable support). Examples of events that are not only being researched (and that underpin the reflections developed in this article), but that also occupy (and pollinate) public spaces and, in general, the “hybrid” spaces of Rio include: *Samba da Ouvidor*, *Jongo da Lapa*, *Baile do Viaduto de Madureira*, *Baile Black Bom*, *Roda de Samba da Pedra do Sal*, *Baile da Gaiola*, *Baile da Rocinha*, to name a few. In fact, it should be noted that the authors (over the years) have regularly conducted field observations and informal conversations with the actors who attend these events.

social segments, and which generally has as its epicenter the practice of circles.¹¹⁷

This is not about (re)constructing an almost romanticised or heroic perspective of the protagonists of musical circles (Moura, 2004; Trotta, 2019). Monetised or not, the aim here is to value their power and ritualistic aspects (Carvalho and Gonçalves, 2014). When we think of manifestations of Black culture, we often associate them with Afro-Brazilian religious practices, in which the circle is used as a structure and dynamic. However, the point we would like to emphasise is that the “circle” ritual is valued by members of musical networks and collectives – which gravitate around sounds and rhythms – because it constitutes a possibility of “performativity” (Taylor, 2013) of everyday life and of constructing dynamics of “reterritorialization” and “agency of spaces” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1995). In these cultural rituals, even though there is a religious dimension present in a diffuse way (Turner, 1974), creativity is achieved through play and tension with the rules that govern everyday relationships, and it is precisely in this inversion that the ritual-performance presents its transformative aspect. If, on the one hand, the space of the circle is structurally identical when it is used, on the other, each circle is unique, constructing a non-reproducible experience. This is mainly due to the way in which the circle is structured, establishing circularities of flows and adjustments. The meaning of the body in the circle is shaped by its understanding as a physical place and the symbolic construction of personal identity, marking the boundary between the self and the “other”.

The symbolic and physical boundaries of the circle are therefore delimited by the bodies that participate therein: actors and stories that construct and update a place in the urban fabric. In the circle, there

¹¹⁷ Evidence of this is indicated and duly analysed in more detail in Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014.

are narratives that intersect in the construction of a symbolic territory that represents a dive, at the same time, into oneself and into the other (Carvalho & Gonçalves, 2014). Beyond the limits of the circle, the action of the body in performance also occurs in the resignification of the physical and real space where this territory is constructed. The actors compose and transform themselves in the circles; the circles compose and transform themselves in the unpredictability and complexity of the street. The actors inscribe culture in the streets through their bodies and their extensions: words, slow rhythms, and voices are unfoldings of corporeality that complete its symbolic dimension and reinforce the performance as a sociocultural action of affirmation and transformation of the streets. Thus, the unfolding of the body in the performance of the circle highlights the temporary occupation of the space of the streets in a physical and symbolic sense.

The performances in a circle ritualise the occupation of these “opaque spaces”. For Santos (2002), the “opaque spaces” would be those that oppose the “luminous spaces”. However, to address this opposition, it is necessary to understand that the “luminous spaces” indicate:

[...] the force of rationalisation emanating from instrumental thought, which, by selecting what does or does not have value, is capable of seducing and convincing [...]. [The “opaque spaces”] are represented as ugly, uninteresting, or dangerous by the dominant thought, as they offer materialisations of alternative rationalities and knowledge related to the socially necessary appropriation of available resources, enabling their multiplication. These are spaces with less technique and more inventiveness, with less domination and more dominion [...], which establish the enigma of invisibility [...]. They would be spaces abandoned by successive modernisations [...] they are spaces of life [...] and survival of many others (Ribeiro, 2012, p. 67-68).

These arts and practices of “doing-with” by these actors in musical events, in their slowed-down corporealities (in relation to the rhythm of the cities) – based on sensitive and emotional exchanges –, provoke transmutations in the urban rhythm by inscribing themselves in the gaps of time, founding “places”.¹¹⁸ Thus, “between resistance and existence [...] slow men continue to transform their weaknesses into strength” (Vidal, 2020, p. 197).

Furthermore, regular participation in musical circles is often associated with an indication of the actors’ “commitment” to a certain cultural scene (not necessarily involving professional artists from the music world or an event that is part of someone’s professional agenda). In general, amateur and professional participants in the circles can mix in an environment valued for “authenticity” (Pereira, 2003). Given the recurring engagement of actors in these musical networks (and their micro-events) – committed especially to the appreciation of Black culture and the democratisation of access to spaces and cultural life in the city –, in previous works we came to call this type of action a form of “musical activism” (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

In fact, what would be the place of street music circles and culture in Rio de Janeiro in the current metropolis project? In a way, we can say that the goals for Rio for the coming years seem to be outlined by the authorities, placing mega-events at the centre of the process of building a “creative city”.¹¹⁹ However, mega-events as a set of exclu-

¹¹⁸ With the intensification of the processes of globalisation (and all the consequences that come with them), researchers in the fields of Sociology and Cultural Geography have focused on the study of space-times and their socio-communicational specificities. Here, we work with the notion presented by Santos (2002), for whom “places” would be affective spaces that take shape as they are experienced, sensitively and intelligibly.

¹¹⁹ The 2009-2012 Strategic Plan for the city of Rio makes clear the importance of culture in urban restructuring and in preparing the environment for international mega-events. The document establishes as the main guideline for guiding cultural policies: “the strengthening of the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro as a cultural reference for the country through

sive and redemptive strategies – which promote economic and social growth in the medium term – have been questioned by experts and significant portions of the population, precisely because they have not yet brought about the expected results for the city of Rio.¹²⁰

At the same time, in the current context, the city government has promoted a major “shortcircuit” by regularly disregarding the minority, the multiple, the polyphonic, and the differences highlighted by cultural expressions. Similar to other moments in the past, the circles and manifestations of Black street culture are sidelined or excluded from ongoing urban projects. Thus, these free public micro-events, as “underground cultural ecosystems”, follow their trajectory in an almost clandestine manner in the urban fabric, gravitating around *jongo*, samba, Rio funk, hip hop, and other Black-music events.

In this context of uncertainty, articulations and controversies have intensified in recent years in the city, highlighting a multiplicity of cultural practices, narratives, and imaginaries that contribute to understanding urban sociocultural dynamics based on their polyphony. By opening this “black box” (Lemos, 2013) and mapping these practices and imaginaries, we observe discursive repertoires that construct ambiguous interpretations of this city.

Some discourses suggest a city characterised not only by urban interventions (which exclude and/or criminalise the poorest segments of the population), but also by speed, impersonality, and saturation.

heritage revitalisation, urban requalification, and promotion of diversity”. (Available at: <http://www.rio.rj.gov.br/dlstatic/10112/6616925/4178940/planejamento_estrategico_site_01.pdf>. Accessed: December 6, 2022).

¹²⁰ A growing number of critics are asking whether there should not be greater Coordination by the state of the city’s cultural agenda (in various areas): so as to support and promote greater integration and synergy between the micro- and mega-events held in the city of Rio, taking into account the cultural life that already exists in everyday life (Jennings *et al.*, 2014).

This would be the globalised Rio, of large concerts and spectacular mega-events. In a way, these narratives reiterate an imaginary of the most visible metropolis: the “city of fear, segregation, and privilege”, of technocratic planning, the city where functionalist and economic logic prevails.

However, there is a set of practices and narratives that are anchored in other imaginaries, which refer to a city (or several) that persist, despite everything, in these “opaque spaces”, in the interstices of the fast-moving space-time of contemporary cities and in an almost invisible way: they allude to a city where actors would promote a more spontaneous and fluid dynamic on a daily basis, in which pleasant, slow-paced experiences with a great capacity for social mobilisation emerge – through exchanges between different social strata. These discourses refer more directly to the relevance of musical micro-events found in everyday life – which establish “distributions of the sensible” (Rancière, 2009)¹²¹ and enable the population to share social values and give new meaning to urban spaces.¹²²

¹²¹ For Rancière (2009), aesthetics would reveal the presence of dissenting worlds within consensual ones, evidencing the tensions that constitute politics as a form of experience. Thus, aesthetics as the basis of politics only becomes apparent because politics is always present in issues related to divisions and borders, to a distribution (which involves, at the same time, division and sharing) of social reality in discursive forms of perception that impose limits on the communicability of the experience of those whose words are excluded from authorised forms of discourse. Here, we assume that the collective experiences produced in Black-music events would promote values, social codes, and worldviews (ethics), founding “communities of sense”. As Marques points out, reëvaluating some of the concepts coined by Rancière: “the community of sense would be, for the author, a community of experimentation and attempts to make realities previously unimaginable or not associated with what is considered ‘common’ appear and be perceived, but without being incorporated, subsumed, transfigured or normalised” (Marques, 2011).

¹²² It is common for the most visible narratives in the media scene to disregard the “power of existence” of local inhabitants, who continue to transform resistance into “re-existence” through small events throughout history.

2.4 The protagonism of minorities in resignifying areas of the city

One of the aspects that has caught our attention in recent years in terms of the resilient actions of minorities in this metropolis is the powerful and intersectional articulation of various “bodies in alliance” (Butler, 2018), especially amongst Black activists, feminists, and activists from the LGBTQIA+ universe in general. In the two case studies that we will analyse next, the leaders of Black-music circles and events, which have traditionally occupied the area of Pequena África, in a certain sense endorse the occupation of this place by other minority groups. It is as if Black musical activism had contributed significantly to paving the way for musical events and street performances in Rio de Janeiro that are increasingly led by female artists and non-binary musicians.

In a way, these minority groups seem to be aware of the great violence and precariousness in the current context – aware of the enormous risks of living in “Urgent Times” (Fernandes *et al.*, 2022) – and have been seeking in a synergistic way not only to resignify their “collective body”, in a broader and more cohesive way, but also to claim their “right to the city”.

Black Bom: from the ball to the institute

Based on the empirical research going on since 2013 (constructed not only from the collection, selection, and analysis of articles published in traditional print media and material posted on social media, but also from field observations and semi-structured interviews with actors), we analysed the resilient role of a Black carioca “scene” (Straw, 2006), based on the case study of the *Baile Black Bom* initially held in Pedra do Sal and Largo da Prainha (in Rio’s city centre) and, later, in other spaces in the so-called Port Zone.

The aforementioned research focused on the analysis of bodily experience of music in cities, especially nomadic ones, which stage the experience of otherness and generally produce situations of social mobilisation. In fact, it is impossible to follow the actors and their collective sound experiences and not be mobilised or, at least, affected in some “bodily” way (Merleau-Ponty, 2004) by the sound of the researched territories. We agree with DeNora when the author emphasises that music has the ability to condition the body, triggering memories (faculties of our memory), and affecting ideas, moods, and emotions (DeNora, 2000). In addition to music, it is not only the sound of live concerts, but also the voices and sounds that echo from the streets, the traffic and the people that surround and shape the environment of these physical gatherings. In this sense, reflecting on bodily experiences leads to rethinking cities based on their sensory power. Therefore, the communicating space and body in interaction demand mutual experimentation so that the body can apprehend the place through *in situ* action. This was the investigative stance adopted: to drift, that is, to pursue paths with the intentionality that seeks what is in the experience of the city, with the aim of sensitively understanding the immanent meanings of places.¹²³

In the case study analysed here, the urban sensory experience took the researchers to the area called Pequena África, located in

¹²³ The proposal to place oneself “adrift” is not random but corresponds to a methodological strategy position that is consciously adopted by researchers, with the aim of understanding the city as a dynamic space that is updated daily based on intelligible and sensitive interactions. Thus, “adrift” presents itself as a non-linear approach (Jacques, 2012), which allows us to understand, in the communicative configuration of the city, multiple phenomena of sociocultural identification. That way, the proposal here is to observe the interactions of the city, not only as an apparatus programmed and planned by urban planners, but as a space of dynamic communicabilities that fold and unfold infinitely, constructing multiple communicating spaces where social articulations and tensions are produced.

the city centre of Rio. Pequena África (and especially Pedra do Sal) is recognised as a historical meeting place for great samba artists of the past¹²⁴, and in recent years it has been converted into an important natural amphitheatre, where street concerts are successfully held – not only samba, but also rock, Black music¹²⁵, jazz and fanfare bands.

In this location, there is a reasonably harmonious relationship between street musicians, the community of Morro da Conceição, and local businesses. In this environment, with the sound of the first chords, there is a profound transformation of the space: field observation showed that the tense bodily experience of the big cities there invariably gives way, gradually, to other seductive and powerful aesthetic sensations. As the musical groups excite the audience, the “soundscape” (Schafer, 1969) transforms and creates a different ambience (Fernandes *et al.*, 2019a and 2019b), with the environment taking on Dionysian contours and the sensations of enjoyment and pleasure intensify.

In the case of *Baile Black Bom*, the musical group that organises it draws attention to the care that its members take with the performance during the concerts (Taylor, 2013). In fact, throughout the performances, the group members interact intensely with the concert-goers: in many, they even break with the logic of the “stage”, performing at the same level as the audience. The environment of proxemics created around it is one of extreme affection. Even experienced researchers are involved (contaminated) in some way by the atmosphere of irrev-

¹²⁴This region occupies a special place in samba’s mythology: its bars were meeting points for important musicians, such as Donga, João da Bahiana, and Pixinguinha, to name a few (see: Moura, 2004).

¹²⁵Over the last four decades, the world of Black music – whether in Brazil or in many countries in the globalised world – is understood as encompassing the universe of soul, blues, disco, funk, reggae, and hip hop. For more details on the musical and cultural diversity contained under the “umbrella” of Black music, see Dapieve (2008).

erence, the feeling of freedom and ecstasy. These practices helped us to understand that the musicians, attendees and fans of *Baile Black Bom*, based on their “performative” experiences (Taylor, 2013) on the streets, creatively reconfigure spaces and redesign them in some way in Rio’s everyday life – even if temporarily and punctually, but with significant reflections on the urban imagination.

At the same time, in the last decade, some spontaneous “engaged” practices or forms of “musical activism” have stood out, structuring (though provisionally) “sonic-musical territorialities” – not necessarily organised by professionals from the mainstream or the so-called independent music sector –, which have been re-potentiating the sociability of strategic territories in the city centre of Rio, which run the risk, cyclically, of becoming “devitalised”, as the history of the city’s last century suggests.¹²⁶

Baile Black Bom is yet another example that indicates the transformative power of parties and live music, which promote conditions for the enhancement of gatherings, aestheses, and affections when articulated with certain architectural and geographic profiles of these places, building favourable conditions not only for the development of entertainment activities (Herschmann, 2005), but also for the resignification of territorialities and urban daily life as well as the expansion of “street musical activism”.

It is important to emphasise again that we consider “musical activism” to be the engagement of actors from diverse musical networks (and their micro-events) committed especially to valuing their racial, sexual, gender, post-gender and transgender demands and identifications, which, in contemporary times, update the struggle for social

¹²⁶ This chapter will not present the socioeconomic (and cultural) results achieved by street music in the city of Rio in too much detail. For more information on the topic, see the work of Fernandes (2011) and Herschmann (2007, 2012).

inclusion and democratisation of access to spaces and to cultural life. There are thus some differences between the more traditional forms of activism (which marked the last decades of the 20th century) and those that have emerged at the beginning of this millennium (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

In general, activism today does not emerge with a clearly pre-defined (structured and organised) agenda; there are no clear hierarchies (with movement spokespeople), and actors seem to be guided by objective and concrete demands related to the “common” (Hardt & Negri, 2009). In that sense, Malini and Antoun (2013) also emphasise that, in general, current activism is characterised by dynamics and strategies developed in networks. Furthermore, in today’s activism, there is generally a very distinct aesthetic and playful dimension; in a way, a strong belief amongst actors that artistic expressions are relevant to achieving political engagement (in this case, music presents itself as a relevant driving force, capable of collaborating to the renewal of the Black movement). In that regard, Szaniecki argues that, in contemporary activism interventions, aesthetics (and even artistic expressions) are used to mobilise the public, create more dialogic expressive devices, more polyphonic discourses and, thus, shifts in meaning (which promote *détournements*) that are important for the construction of “biopolitical” struggle strategies (Szaniecki, 2007).

Considering these propositions, we highlight the polyphony of *Black Bom* events: the balls are held as events that bring together other activities (in addition to concerts), such as craft fairs, dance floors with DJs, and Afro-entrepreneurship workshops.¹²⁷ *Baile Black Bom* was created in 2013 and attracts a growing audience with each edition. The idea is to remember the old *charme* and Black balls of

¹²⁷ Whether as a ball or an institute, *Black Bom* has regularly offered throughout its history training activities for DJs, crafts, hairdressing, fashion, and other activities.

the 1970s, mixing old and new hits and remixes created by the band's DJs. Another aspect of the event is the combination of Black music and cultural activities in promoting Black culture and identity. There are also street vendors selling drinks and food at low prices. All of this contributes to a more varied attendance in the area (attracting different social segments), and there is a much greater presence of attendees of different ages, including occasional audiences (newcomers or even tourists) all the way to members of Rio's hip-hop movement as well as longtime attendees of the *bailes de charme* and Black balls. The ball is also held in a hotel, in a central, more accessible area of the city, thus favouring access for workers and students, the vast majority of whom use public transportation.

In the case of *Baile Black Bom*, this activism is expressed not only by the music, but also by the body dressed in "Black fashion" (Herschmann *et al.*, 2016) that occupies the streets, creating an environment made up of elements such as music, visual iconography, performances, fashion, aesthetics, and value systems – transforming the space into a place; a space for sharing and exchanging sensitive musical experiences. The success of this ball has been so astounding in recent years that the event has gained more space in the traditional media.

Beautiful people, excitement and lots of good music. This is the recipe for *Baile Black Bom*, an event created by group Consciência Tranquila [...] that is very successful in Pedra do Sal and Largo da Prainha, in Rio's city centre [...]. The group promotes a journey through various musical genres, with reinterpretations of great hits from the 1970s to today. In addition to music, there is also an exhibition of products from the Afro-entrepreneurs network, with the sale of t-shirts and other

items. The *Centro de Articulação de Populações Marginalizadas* also distributes literature kits on Black topics.¹²⁸

According to the founders of this ball, the choice of location is related to the historical relevance of the city centre for the history of Afro-Brazilian culture.

Initially, our group didn't imagine performing on the streets, but we realised this could be a cool way to go. So, we had the idea of reviving historic Black-street dances. I think the fact we did this in Pedra do Sal, Largo da Prainha, and other locations in Pequena África was very important because very important moments in Afro-Brazilian culture were experienced there [...]. With this ball, we sought to create a broad cultural and political event, as complete as possible, capable of mobilising and raising awareness amongst people.¹²⁹

The intention of this network is not only to promote the occupation of public space – ethnic awareness –, but also to celebrate an “Afro-Black” style through the musical consumption of Black music hits, both Brazilian and international. In fact, this redefinition of space into a “place” – into “affective spaces”, “spaces of solidarity happenings” (Santos, 2002) – redefines uses and generates values of multiple natures, such as cultural, anthropological, and socioeconomic, from which multiple cultural existences are assumed. The actors interact with each other, enhancing the creation of “another place”,

¹²⁸ See: *Depois do sucesso no centro do Rio, Baile Black Bom chega ao SESC Nova Iguaçu*. *O Globo, Caderno de Cultura*, February 5, 2014. (Available at: <<http://oglobo.globo.com/culture/tv-magazine/after-success-in-downtown-rio-baile-Black-bom-arrives-at-sesc-nova-iguacu-12297911>>. Accessed: January 25, 2022).

¹²⁹ Testimony by Antônio Consciência, lead singer of the group and one of the founders of *Black Bom*, given to the authors on May 10, 2013.

of another *ethos*, which encompasses the diversities experienced in their socio-spatial everyday.

Black balls can be understood as the result of “cultural reconversion” strategies (Yúdice, 1997). Adopted through a system marked by economic and cultural globalisation, cultural reconversion allows individuals to develop new practices, skills, and languages for their reinsertion into new conditions of production, consumption, and sociability. In this sense, the actions that characterised the phenomenon cannot be interpreted only as acts of “resistance”. The creative nuances and identity reconfigurations marked by consumption underpinned a series of actions that pointed to a provocative, subversive, and contradictory potential of cultural policies guided by their “lifestyle”¹³⁰, which crossed and cut across class and race boundaries.

In the case of *Baile Black Bom*, there is a mix of this fashion made famous in previous decades, considered vintage by them, with elements related to other cultural references: thus, it is often possible to see attendees wearing clothes and accessories of Black people from the Caribbean (related to the cultural universe of reggae, such as hats, dreadlocks, robes, etc.), with clothes that refer to the world of samba (such as the straw hat and other pieces of *malandragem* clothing), as well as with big sports brands and/or shirts that pay homage to great stars of Brazilian and US basketball teams, traditionally worn by hip-hop fans. The public often wears accessories that refer to emblematic diasporic symbols of the “Black Atlantic” (Gilroy, 2001): thus, it is possible to find young people sporting rings, necklaces, and earrings

¹³⁰ For Herschmann, we would live today under the aegis of a “politics of style”. In other words, that, from style, we would construct marks of distinction, identities, a “place” in the world. The author identifies a form of political expression in the recurrent adoption of styles in contemporary society. For him, in a certain sense, style would be the language of the world of dense appearances (of visibility management) in which we live (Herschmann, 2000; Herschmann, 2005).

that reference African or Afro-Brazilian culture. One of the street vendors of handcrafted items told us, for example, that she was “[...] very pleased because the earring in the shape of the African continent was selling very well these weeks [...] we see that Afrofuturism is really on the rise with the public”.¹³¹

Both attendees and producers of Black balls produced mediated responses that combined creativity and consumption to configure their style – dramatising, performing, and constructing their own language that marked their daily lives with an explicit political and significant gesture. Styles, as significant and codified practices, are composed of elements such as music, visual iconography, performances, fashion, aesthetics, and value systems. And they became traces of a meaning and identity in dispute, symbolising, at the same time, a refusal of stereotypes and homogenising views as well as an oblique challenge to more established cultural expressions (Herschmann, 2000).

A whole set of Black-style rhetorics has been produced through fashion, dance, haircuts, music and leisure events that establish a dialogue, devoid of rigid and perceptible standards, between alternative processes of subjectivation and the conditions of material existence. Black culture, guided by the consumption of musical genres, symbols, and significant objects, has never been a uniform set; it has always been divided by ethnic differences, which do not fully coincide nor form a homogeneous whole. However, it shares the same type of language and significant practices, manifested in style – a mediated and codified response to transformations affecting this “cultural scene” (Straw, 2006).¹³²

¹³¹ Testimony given by street vendor Katucha Costa on May 17, 2013.

¹³² By attending these ball spaces, the public in Rio helped to consolidate and update a dress style and a code of behaviour that combined the various references of visual information that they received from magazines, films, TV programmes, and album covers. This search for differentiation through the choice of certain fashion items (such as platform

Throughout these years of research, we have observed that musical and cultural consumption in this scene assumes the function of a social experience and a collective appropriation of worldly objects that acquire new value, structuring alternative relationships of solidarity and distinction. All these strategies that intertwined aesthetics, performance, language, sounds, and discourses were ways of negotiating positions, triggering new representations, and using alternative practices of cultural consumption that enabled the construction of a political action of difference, guided by an aesthetic direction in an attempt to transgress social boundaries.

In forming a Black style, “stereotypes” are often used (Goffman, 2009) as representation strategies and forms of identification that reveal tensions between established practices and new social desires. New styles are built on stereotypes but remove their fixity and represent dynamic alterities, which transform subjects into imaginary objects based on the production of distinct images that allow them to postulate equivalences, similarities, and identifications that differ from what is already established. Styles facilitate the transmission of information and messages, creating dramatisations of languages in complex images, favouring the expression of new realities. Here, style – through consumption – enables the exposure of agents in transformation and individuals who act as “accumulators of ‘senses’” (Bauman, 1999, p. 91), which reveals a strategy of identification with

or two-tone shoes and bell-bottoms) and the use of natural hair, inspired by the look of members of the US Black movement, marked an attempt to incorporate an international aesthetic by the young people attending the balls, most of whom came from less privileged social segments, but who were connected to an increasingly globalised culture (as the turn of the 21st century approached). Evidently, information today reaches all of them through new technologies (mobile devices, MP3, MP4, social media), and the balls have become an important moment for the realisation of a collective and cathartic experience of updating local Black culture.

specific social groups. In relation to the organisers and the audiences of this ball, a distinctive impulse is found in the construction of an “Afro style”, adopted at different levels and not without tensions, by white and Black individuals, including clothes, accessories, ways of dancing, slang in the “performance of musical taste” itself (Henion, 2010). The set of performances (Taylor, 2013) materialises in a kind of nostalgic consumption, which can be understood as “an act of critical subversion of a present considered stagnant, derelict, and lacking in novelty”.¹³³

One of the ways in which the Black style is dramatized is in the presentation of hair. The hairstyle, commonly called “Afro” or “Black,” is an appropriate aesthetic instrument for positively reclaiming symbolic images in the affirmation of what it is “to be Black” based on processes of self-esteem, representation, and recognition. The Black Power hairstyle, in this context, would be that used by South African, US, and Brazilian Black activists in the 1960s and 1970s (Gomes, 2006), triggered by the Black Power movement from a redefinition of beauty signs in which “Afro” (“natural”) hairstyles would become a way of building self-esteem and self-knowledge.¹³⁴

¹³³ Statement given to the authors by 22-year-old João B. Silva, a regular at this ball, on April 12, 2015.

¹³⁴ As cultural references, body and hair can be taken as visible expressions of the allocation of subjects in different social strata (Gomes, 2006). Hair, then, comes to be understood as a striking indication of ethnic origin and one of the main biotypological elements in the individual constitution within cultures, carrying with it a “symbol bank” (Sansone, 2004), which concerns a complex language system. In this case, “Afro” hair, and other types of hairstyle – such as Rastafarian and dreadlocks – assume, for Africans and Afro-descendants, the importance of “rescuing” (through aesthetics) ancestral memories – close, familiar, and everyday memories as embodied diacritical signs that refer to African ancestry, in a visual and behavioural process of identification associated with attitudes of reaction, resistance, and denunciation against discrimination (Gomes, 2006, p. 128). At the same time, despite the symbolic and ideological burden placed on “Black” hair, we understand that hair itself plays a decisive role in various identity configurations,

In general, when it comes to music, *Baile Black Bom* generally plays Black music that is suitable for dancing. Thus, both during the two sets of the group's live performance and in the music performed by the guest DJs (some, such as DJ Flash, DJ Tammy, and DJ Julio Rodrigues, often partake in the ball) that the repertoire is quite varied. They play songs by Brazilian artists and bands (Jorge Ben Jor, Tim Maia, Sandra de Sá, Gerson King Combo, Simoninha, Os Racionais, amongst others that are always mentioned) as well as foreign artists (Areta Franklin, Jackson Five, Marvin Gaye, and James Brown are generally referenced) – all associated with diverse musical genres, such as funk, hip hop, disco, soul, blues, and reggae. This repertoire is danced at the ball almost always collectively, almost everyone who dances performs a harmonious choreography that involves those who are “on the dance floor”.

Due to partnerships with the government and private sector, and to address the crisis in the country's cultural sector, itinerant editions of this ball began to be held more frequently in other parts of the city, in neighbourhoods in Rio's metropolitan area. In fact, starting in 2016, with the deepening crisis in the cultural sector and especially due to the lack of support from the government for holding events in public spaces in the city, this network of collectives that organises *Baile Black Bom* was forced to rethink and implement new strategies, aiming at the survival and continuity of its activities. Thus, these actors took a turn and decided to create the IBB (*Instituto Black Bom*), which, according to them, has the following goal:

beyond appearance. Hair is considered here in line with what Mercer proposes: “as part of the different forms of everyday appearance; that is, the ways in which we shape and style our hair can be seen both as individual expressions of the self and as embodiments of society's norms, conventions, and expectations” (Mercer, 1987, p. 34).

The IBB was born as an offshoot of the movement initiated by *Baile Black Bom* in 2013, to act in the socioeconomic development of Black and peripheral communities, through Cultural Production with a focus on the Creative Economy Market. [...] The IBB saw the opportunity to reduce the impact of social disparities, transforming its intellectual capital, symbolic values, and the practice of cultural production into new forms of social development, through the Creative Economy, with a focus on the social ascension of the Black population involved in its production chain. In 2017, its headquarters became the first coworking space for black and peripheral entrepreneurs in the state of Rio de Janeiro. This movement arose from the need to identify aesthetic recognition as well as the intellectual and economic empowerment that provides visibility to the Black creative market.¹³⁵

By conducting informal conversations and interviews with the actors (in addition to the fieldwork), we saw a significant change in the “tactics and cunning” (De Certeau, 1998) applied, aiming to make these “artist practices” viable and more sustainable. They practice a predominantly ethnic-racial activism, which articulates art, affirmative action policies, and a solidarity and creative economy. In this sense, the IBB suggests a new profile of activism that also seeks to value its entrepreneurial facet (so relevant for the country’s underserved Black population).¹³⁶ In fact, regarding this shift from activism centred on the ball to one organised around the Institute, Sami Brasil makes some very relevant comments:

¹³⁵ For more information, see the IBB’s page (Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/InstitutoBlackBom>>, accessed: January 25, 2022).

¹³⁶ Since its creation in 2017, the IBB has sought to be a space for the dynamization of this network of artists and entrepreneurs. During the period in which it had a physical headquarters – between 2017 and 2019 –, the Black Bom Institute also functioned as a collaborative space, supporting several initiatives.

Baile Black Bom grew quickly, in a way we could no longer do like when we started [...]. You could say the period between 2014 and 2015 was the peak of our movement on the streets [...] it was a period of great public support, there was a lot of investment in culture, especially in our area, in the Port Region. At the same time, we ended up on TV and became very famous, and finally, we realised we could no longer carry out events spontaneously and independently, without any kind of support. Unfortunately, from 2017 onwards, we found ourselves without any kind of support from the government. And that was exactly when we had the idea of creating the *Instituto Black Bom*. So, with the resources we had saved from the boom years, we rented a space in Lapa. Since we were unable to hold street balls, we tried to somehow bring together our network of very engaged people, we tried to connect with our network of collectives. The Institute became a space for coexistence and creation beyond the Ball. It was a period of super-growth, but at the same time very difficult, with very little money. I also think it's in crisis that we see our potential to do business, to overcome any adversity [...]. From that moment on, as the *Instituto Black Bom*, we sought to create an alternative business model, combining music and the organisation of creative fairs. In other words, we have sought to associate popular culture with the creative solidarity economy [...] trying to be more entrepreneurial and with more sustainable activities. As artists, we contribute by bringing our audience and, in turn, the exhibitors pay the *Instituto Black Bom* a small fee. And so we have been able to maintain this structure reasonably well.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Testimony given to the authors by Sami Brasil, one of the founders of the *Instituto Black Bom*, on April 29, 2020.

Still on the subject of difficulties in remaining in public spaces and close to the region of Pequena África, she makes other significant remarks:

We tried not to move away from the region of Pequena África; we remain committed to that region, to all the history of that place. Of course we have also been looking for alternatives, trying to guarantee sustainability. We occupied Terreirão for a few months, holding some wonderful events. To give you an idea: in December, we brought the *Feira Preta de São Paulo*, which was a great success. Unfortunately, the Terreirão da Praça XI is a huge and very expensive space. [...] In 2019, we took another turn [...], so it was an important year, because that was when we were able to return to the Pequena África area, developing partnerships with the private sector, which is already operating there. We participated in the *Festival de Ativação Urbana*, which was taking place in the Port Zone, and then launched the *A Rua é Nossa* project, aimed at our network as a whole. Therefore, we are increasingly *not* limited to the role of artists or only privileging the interests of our group. *Baile Black Bom* is one of the artistic groups that participate in this broader initiative, focused not only on promoting other musical groups, but also on the Afro-entrepreneurship of artisans. Thanks to the work of the *Instituto Black Bom*, some street vendors have had great success and have managed to significantly increase their clientele with these events. Until the outbreak of the Covid pandemic, the events had been taking place regularly at Passeio Ernesto Nazareth, in a wonderful garden. It was a shame the process was interrupted, as we managed to attract a very significant audience there, always making room for other groups, such as *Moça Prosa*, *Folia Carioca*, *Slam das Minas*, and even groups from abroad.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ *Idem.*

In this sense, *Black Bom* – whether as a ball or an institute – is part of a long tradition of cultural occupation, which has been promoted through the agency of Black music. As was the case with samba circles, funk balls, and hip-hop battles, *Black Bom* has been facing an ambiguous dynamic (especially in the media scene), which, on the one hand, glamorises and values at times the performance of these actors, and, on the other, produces narratives and practices that make it difficult to carry out these activities. Thus, *Black Bom* is another case study that suggests the resilient and pollinating role of Black music in Rio. At the same time, these ethnic-racial activist practices – which articulate music and the solidarity and creative economy – differ from the engaged practices that marked the 20th century, putting into play a broader and more diffuse political agenda that involves the intersection of racial issues with (post)gender issues and queer culture (Fernandes & Herschmann, 2020). This activism of *Black Bom* is therefore inserted in a trend of multitudinous and identity struggles of minorities, increasingly present in today’s world and characterised by polarisations between numerous social segments, socioeconomic and environmental imbalances, and, finally, excessive precariousness of social life.

Gender issues and female protagonism in Rio’s world of samba¹³⁹

Against the backdrop of this set of topics already mentioned about the city of Rio, one of the issues that has most attracted our attention in the performance of the creative sectors is the growing protagonism

¹³⁹ A shorter version of this section was published in Fernandes *et al.* (2022). We would like to thank Andrea Estevão for her contributions to the development of reflections on feminist Carnival blocks.

of women, which we will analyse in the last section of this chapter about the state capital, especially in the field of music.

Thus, what we would like to emphasise here is that amongst the most notable events in recent years in Rio are the street parties and circles held by groups of women who, through music, sounds, and gestures, update the “feminist claims”¹⁴⁰ and post-feminist claims that have emerged with great force since the beginning of the 2010s, and which have guided local and global public demonstrations, such

¹⁴⁰There is a historical understanding in the field of Social Movement Studies that suggests understanding women’s struggles in terms of “waves”. According to Gohn (2014), the first wave corresponded to the struggles for equal rights in the 18th and 19th centuries and early 20th centuries; feminist struggles of the second wave (from 1960 to 1980) emerged within the debate on “the personal is political”, an expression attributed to journalist and radical feminist Carol Hanisch, which would become the motto of the second wave in 1969; and the third wave, a term attributed to Rebecca Walker, based on her article “Becoming the Third Wave” (published in 1993 in *Ms. magazine*), which began in the 1990s, would have as its object of struggle and action the criticism of female representation by the mass media. Regarding current women’s demands, we do not understand them as a “fourth wave”, since they would not be a historical continuation of previous waves, since they present themselves as a movement that challenges this understanding by taking root in the decolonial struggle movements of the “Global South”, which emphasise “intersectionality” (Davis, 2016) between race, class, gender and, sexuality, highlighting the coloniality of power. Based on US Black feminism, the decolonial approach engendered – and continues to trigger – profound transformations in Eurocentric values, provoking epistemological, subjective, and intersubjective changes by weaving other ways of understanding and analysing global sociopolitical and cultural relations. As Mignolo (2013) points out, this approach begins at the moment when we assume “abandoning the universal idea of humanity that was imposed on us by the West, modelled after the imperial ideal of the ‘white, heterosexual, Christian man’, and undoing it, to rebuild it in the beauty and uncontrollable diversity of life, the world, and knowledge. Today we are all on this path, the path of reducing the universality of the narrative of modernity to its fair measure, recognising its merits and repudiating its aberrations” (p. 23). By challenging, reviewing and, at times, breaking with the universalism of the political subject of white women – whose theories do not contemplate the realities of racialised women from colonised territories –, decolonial feminism offers another place of enunciation and struggle for the invisible groups of peripheral women (such as indigenous, Black, Latina, mixed-race, immigrant, and lesbian women).

as *SlutWalk* in Brazil, the Women’s March against Trump, the Black Women’s March in Brazil, the International Women’s Strike, or the Women’s March in Washington. In that sense, demands such as the right to one’s body, the right to be in and enjoy the cities, the right to abortion, to pleasure, and other possible transivities are present in the “performatisations” (Taylor, 2013) of these artists and activists who use the street as a stage, performing a “full-bodied musical politics”. In this scenario of growth and intense scene of collective and engaged cultural production in urban spaces, particularly the articulation of “feminist cultural collectives” (Hollanda, 2018), we sought to work with some relevant case studies from the world of samba in Rio: the *Samba que Elas Querem* circle and the *Mulheres Rodadas* carnival block – initiatives that have been held regularly in Rio since the 2010s. These are expressions of “musical activism” (or artivism), of strengthening the “ties between art and politics” (Aznar and Clavo, 2007; Raposo, 2015) in urgent times.

Female bodies in and around the city

The intention of this research project was to continue investigating the “cunning and tactics” (De Certeau, 1994) that actors – whether musicians and artists, cultural producers, local leaders, or fan networks – have developed to continue “resisting” and acting in the streets, even in a clearly less democratic context. Through semi-structured interviews and field observations (of sensitive experiences) constructed in street circles and parties, we evaluated the capacity of the performed music, capable of creating “places” that resignify and enhance the urban experience, even in this gloomier scenario. We noticed that women-led initiatives promoted “dissensus” (Rancière, 1996 and 2009), putting “controversies” (Latour, 2012) on stage. In recent years, tensions have emerged involving, on the one hand, the city of urban interventions, speed, saturation, and impersonality, of great spectacles

and mega-events – that is, the city of technocratic planning, fear, and the privilege of functionalist and financial logic –, and, on the other, the city that perseveres and persists in spite of everything – that is, the city of dynamics implemented by actors in everyday life who build and update a “metropolis of encounters, affections, and sharing”, giving rise to pleasurable and slowed-down experiences, which allow the city’s inhabitants to frequently resignify spaces.

This object of study involving Rio’s female street sound culture is of particular interest to us because a kind of “battlefield” currently revolves around it, capable of giving rise to tensions and conflicts in current topics that not only “pollinate” (Moulier-Boutang, 2010) the street culture of the city, but also insert relevant issues into the agenda of the day, such as: tolerance, gentrification, citizenship, gender, post-gender, racism, sexism, decoloniality, heteronormativity, and violence (Fernandes & Herschmann, 2020).

It is important to emphasise that samba and other “popular and peripheral musical genres” (Trotta, 2013) took a long time to be recognised by critics and the government in Brazil. By looking into historical documents, it is clear that, even after they were recognised, these genres were frequently questioned, indicating the persistence of social and ethnic-racial discrimination. At the same time, feminism emerged in samba as a minority movement within this musical universe, especially denouncing the reproduction of sexism, exclusion, and violence against women within this cultural expression. Despite the challenges to be overcome in a violent, sexist, and heteronormative environment, these “artists” (Fernandes *et al.*, 2022; Aznar & Clavo, 2007; Semova, 2019) and their audience (predominantly female) consider it important to occupy all spaces, even if it is in confrontation and tension with men, by participating in circles and processions.

It is likewise important to emphasise that these interactions between body, city, and aesthetic experience are understood as collective

performances, or as “embodied forms of action” that trigger, according to Butler (2018, p. 14), provisional solidarities in which different and precarious bodies come together with the desire and power of action to redesign the urban sociopolitical experience. That way, they offer other perceptions about the social and political conditions of their bodily existences: not only by performing *in* and *around* the city, but also by building powerful alliances that allow them to survive under adverse conditions.

In that sense, based on this ongoing research – which involved field observations, semi-structured interviews, surveys of materials circulating in various media outlets and relevant narratives that have been found on social media (and which have offered opportunities to develop very rich reflections on this territory) –, we sought to follow the trails of these young women in their “associations and movements”, aiming to build a cartography that would be capable of opening the “black boxes” (Lemos, 2013) of this context.¹⁴¹ Therefore, the samba performed by women in Rio brings to the stage “bodies in alliance” (Butler, 2018) as well as important controversies and tensions.

Following the everyday as a fundamental perspective into the city, urban musical festival scenes present and displace female corporealities from a place of passivity and submission to one of action and presence in party environments, enabling the displacement of essentialist discourses on sex, race, and gender, which constitute the social relations of Brazilian society. What has been revealed over the last few years of research on the streets of Rio is that female, non-binary, transgender, Black, and precarious bodies continue to work together to provoke political shifts through their performances at urban parties

¹⁴¹ We would like to thank Luiza Kosovski, a research fellow, who helped us to gather the research material presented here. Special thanks also to CAPES, CNPq, and FAPERJ for their support for this research.

and circles. This non-essentialist perspective of these bodies escapes the binary logic forged by modern discourses and narratives, allowing us to approach the perspective of Duvignaud (1983), for whom parties can be spaces of violation and transgression, not only of perpetuation and legitimisation of rules, values, and social norms of an era, but also experienced as the search for “full contentment” resulting from the realisation of desires and enjoyment, of experiencing moments of rupture and subversion in relation to established cultural standards. In this way, we understand the festive atmosphere on the streets of Rio – expressed by the body, dance, and music – as a temporary moment of “erasure” of the structures of violence and oppression, in which historically precarious groups temporarily break with the positions of subordination that were/are imposed on them. In these times-spaces of celebration, or “high places”¹⁴², groups of women, Black people, transvestites, lesbians, gays, transsexuals, and queers take centre stage through performances and “dissensual performativities” that enunciate other ways of inhabiting and existing, other ethics and aesthetics. The protagonism of these insubordinate bodies that occupy urban spaces signals what we are calling “performances of dissensus,” in which the code of insubordination is seen through the sensorimotor apparatus. It is through the body, the way of being, the gestures – that is, the

¹⁴² Places that represent communion, reconnection, which engender the specific meaning of each group. Places where feelings of communion are experienced, in the most religious sense of the term. These places can be concrete or symbolic. They can be configured in a defined time and space as well as in a virtual or imaginative space. What they all have in common is that they represent spaces of celebration. Celebration that, according to the author, “gives the religious its original dimension of reconnection; this can be a technical celebration (Musée de la Villette, Videoteca), cultural (Beaubourg), playful-erotic (Le Palace), of consumerism (Les Halles), of sports (Parc Princes, Roland-Garros), musical (Bercy), religious (Notre-Dame), intellectual (the great amphitheatre of the Sorbonne), political (Versailles), commemorative (l’Arche de la Défense) etc...these are the spaces in which the mysteries are celebrated. Where we resemble each other, where we recognise the other, and, thus, we recognise ourselves” (Maffesoli, 2003, pp. 71-72).

performance – that it becomes visible that these groups’ practices operate in dissensus. It is necessary to clarify that the notion worked on here, and in other articles, about “dissensual performance” or the “performance of dissensus” is based on the philosophical reformulation proposed by Rancière on the concept of politics. We refer to the author’s arguments in order to elucidate that the concept of politics presented by him – invoking the logic not of consensus, but of dissensus – seems to translate the everyday experiences practiced by various communities and social groups in contemporaneity. Rancière states that his hypothesis:

[...] therefore implies a reformulation of the concept of politics in relation to the notions that are usually accepted. These designate the word politics as the set of procedures whereby the aggregation and consent of collectives is achieved, the organisation of powers and the management of populations, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimising this distribution. I propose to give this system of distribution and legitimisation another name. I propose to call it *the police*, thus expanding the usual meaning of this notion, also giving it a neutral, nonpejorative meaning, by considering the functions of surveillance and repression usually associated with this word as particular forms of a much more general order, that of the sensible distribution of bodies in a community. That is not the reason why what I call police is simply a set of forms of management and command. It is, more fundamentally, the cropping of the sensible world that defines, most of the time implicitly, the forms of the space in which command is exercised. It is the order of the visible and the sayable that determines the distribution of parts and roles, by first determining the very visibility of the “capacities” and “incapacities” associated with a given place or function. By thus broadening the concept of police, I propose to restrict that of politics. I propose to reserve the word politics for the set of activities that disturb the order

of the police by inscribing a presupposition that is entirely heterogeneous to it. This presupposition is the equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being. This equality, [...] is not inscribed directly in the social order. It manifests itself only through dissensus, in the most original sense of the term: a disturbance in the sensible, a singular modification of what is visible, sayable, countable. This “disturbance in the sensible” can be illustrated from the ordinary meaning of the words politics and police. What happens, in effect, when the forces of order are sent to repress a political demonstration? What happens is a contestation of the properties and the uses of a place: a contestation of what a street is. From the police’s point of view, a street is a space for movement. The demonstration, in turn, transforms it into a public space, a space where community matters are discussed. From the point of view of those who send the police, the space where community matters are discussed is located elsewhere: in public buildings designated for that purpose, with the people designated for that function. Thus, dissensus, rather than being opposition to opposition between a government and the people who challenge it, is a conflict over the very configuration of the sensible. The protesters put on the street a spectacle and an issue that has no place there. And to the curious who see this spectacle, the police say: “Let’s move around, there’s nothing to see”. Dissensus thus has as its objective what I call the cutting out of the sensible, the distribution of private and public spaces, of the subjects that are or are not dealt with in them, and of the actors who do or do not have reasons to be there to deal with them [...] Before being a conflict of classes or parties, politics is a conflict over the configuration of the sensible world in which actors and their objects can stem from conflicts [...] To argue in favour of dissensus is not, therefore, to argue in favour of yesterday’s heroic forms of political and social struggle. The problem is posed differently. There are things that one mode of reason can do that another cannot do

in its place. The political forms of dissensus were formed from struggles against these disturbances that agitate individuals and groups based on the feeling of threatened identity and threatening otherness. In their own way, they pacified certain anguish, hatred, and death drives. Today, the police forms of consensus promise a peace that they cannot maintain, because they have never assessed the dimension of their deep problems. [...] One cannot renounce one reason except in favour of another, capable of doing what the previous one did but better. This is not the case with the consensual proposition. That is why, beyond all nostalgia, I argue that we should not decide for the disappearance of this political reason that I summarised in the word dissensus. (Rancière, 1996, pp. 372-373).

This notion helps us reflect on “what female bodies can do at a party” (Fernandes *et al.*, 2018), by expanding and creating a “place for female figurations”, highlighting their demands from the past and present, inscribing themselves worldly. This act of worldly inscription in various spaces of the city territorialises the dreams and daily practices that are rooted in a germinating humus of different identifications and sharings. This sharing and recognition are important to ensure the protection of the bodies performing in urban spaces. In other words, the collective female arrangement, whilst providing conditions for the “performances of dissensus”, depends on them to occur, in the sense that articulating spaces of protection for it to happen depends on the positive interaction between all those involved so that the festive experience is viable and safe. And, thus, we see that not only the political dimension of the claim to occupy spaces crosses female bodies, but also the affective politics related to the notion of otherness of those who “celebrate-with”. The city, when practiced through the party, creates another body, let us call it the “festive-body” associated with escaping from order, viscosity, and sensitivity. In this sense, the experience of the street party relates the “festive-body” to the “city-

body”, so that we can understand that these bodies are constantly negotiating, coming into conflict, granting and imposing limits. In this way, we propose to understand how the “festive-body” experiences the city based on its interactive, social, and political conditions, and, from there, expresses itself in the ways in which it moves and inscribes itself in the city, putting pressure on the programming of urban projects and regulations¹⁴³ (Fernandes, 2021).

Rio’s female street samba music scene: Bloco Mulheres Rodadas and Roda Samba que Elas Querem¹⁴⁴

The organisers of *Bloco Mulheres Rodadas* present it as the first feminist carnival procession in Rio’s history. Created in 2015, it paved the way for a series of other blocks that now fly the same flag. As the following report suggests:

[...] feminist Carnival (wo)manned up. But this is not an isolated phenomenon. Carnival, this parallel universe, finds its driving force in reality. It is the result of a lot of glitter and articulated work throughout the year. If there are Carnival blocks that gather without rehearsal and end after two hours, exciting everyone, and leaving no trace, these are not the ones from the movement that has been redefining women’s role in the party [...]. Feminists, organised in blocks that they themselves founded or joining blocks that do not necessarily bear the

¹⁴³This discussion follows those by researchers from the Research Group Communications, Art, and the City (CAC), linked to PPGCOM-UERJ, over the course of several years. Part of it can be accessed in the collection *Arte, Comunicação e (Trans)política*, organised by Cíntia Sanmartin Fernandes, Jess Reia, and Patricia Gomes, (Available at: <<https://seloppgcom.fafich.ufmg.br/novo/publicacao/arte-comunicacao-e-transpolitica/>>, accessed: January 24, 2022).

¹⁴⁴We would like to thank Andrea Estevão for her collaboration and for sharing information and reflections from her research on *Bloco Mulheres Rodadas*.

feminist seal, have already changed a lot in recent Carnivals. They have denaturalised sexual harassment, without a doubt.¹⁴⁵

The protagonism of women in Carnival seems to have grown so much that it is now possible to speak of a Carnival that prioritises gender issues. This growth was not only due to the number of groups, but also to the way their agendas and actions took over street carnival as a whole. During the 2020 Rio Carnival, dozens of groups read a manifesto rejecting harassment and violence against women, prepared by a movement called *Atenta e Forte*¹⁴⁶, which seeks to create a support infrastructure for women who are victims of any type of harassment during the carnival festivities. This initiative has the support of the government and has even raised funds to set up support tents in strategic locations in Rio. Other initiatives, such as designing temporary tattoos with feminist mottos, attest that women are increasingly transforming their own bodies as flags, incorporating slogans that especially evoke the demand for respect.

Clearly, women's leading role in Carnival also involves organising blocks and parades, leading musical-instrument workshops and also working as instrumentalists, in addition to developing strategies to defend and support women during the festivities. In several statements to the press about the agenda of feminist groups, organisers comment

¹⁴⁵ Bianconi, Giulliana. *Consolidado, o Carnaval Feminista ainda pode incluir mais*. Época, January 26, 2020. (Available at: <<https://oglobo.globo.com/epoca/columnistas/columna-consolidado-carnaval-feminista-ainda-pode-incluir-mais-24209866>>. Accessed: July 23, 2020).

¹⁴⁶ *Atenta e Forte* (*Vigilant and Strong*) is the code name of the Women's Commission against Violence during Carnival, formed by leaders from groups such as *Bloco Mulheres Rodadas*, *Todas por Todas* collective, and two dozen groups linked to Carnival. This group was successful in demanding action from the Rio de Janeiro Public Defender's Office. This commission drafted a manifesto against harassment and violence against women, which garnered the support from dozens of carnival collectives, which recognised the importance of joining this struggle, reading the manifesto before processions.

on the main motivations for creating the blocks: guaranteeing a territory of freedom and safety, where women have the celebrate without worry, in addition to the chance to play during Carnival since, with the growth of street carnival, this market has become an important job opportunity.¹⁴⁷ Several women are leading the organisation of street carnival, even before the explosion of the festivity took on shades of feminist activism: it is easy to see the leading role of women in the organisation of some groups, such as *Bloco de Segunda*, *Imprensa que Eu Gamo*, *Escravos da Mauá*, and *Gigantes da Lira*. In addition to these blocks, it is worth remembering the irreverent *Vem ni Mim que Sou Facinha* and *Bloco das Trepadeiras*, also organised by women and which have always shared critiques that are both good-humoured and combative of stereotypes (in these blocks, women affirm their condition as being allowed to desire and defend freedoms in the face of persistent conservatism, typical of phallogentric and patriarchal culture).

Since its foundation, the actors of *Bloco Mulheres Rodadas* have been practicing an activism of fierce and humorous confrontation, a playful mockery of sexism. It all started with a post on Facebook page *Jovens de Direita*, which went viral on social media, generating various types of objections, including ironic ones, in relation to a photo in which a young man was holding a sign that read: “I don’t deserve a woman who’s been around the block”. The motto of the first parade, in 2015, was precisely to critically and freely reinterpret the prejudiced expression “*mulheres rodadas*” (an expression meaning “a woman who has been around the block”). In the last two years, the audience has considerably grown and diversified, with a notable presence of actors

¹⁴⁷ To have an idea of the disproportion of job opportunities for female musicians, Luciana Requião looked at the records Rio’s Musicians’ Union at the beginning of 2020 and found that 8,146 of those registered are men (82%), whilst only 1,805 or 12% are women (for more details, see: Requião, 2020).

– the majority of whom are women –, who have also been putting on stage a queer and anti-racism agenda. What we can see is that, after Carnival 2015, the group began to organise workshops on musical instruments – percussion and wind instruments – and on how to elevate women, creating other spaces for socialisation and enabling them to participate in Carnival in an even more organic way and with greater protagonism. This investment in the musical structure of the group also translates into the research of repertoire that, year after year, highlights women composers and songs that deal with issues affecting the everyday in the household, love life, and social inclusion of women. Dona Ivone Lara, Clementina de Jesus, and Chiquinha Gonzaga are some of the composers honoured. In 2020, the group sang the song *Seu Grito* (“Your Cry”), by Pernambuco’s Aurinha do Coco, which refers to a femicide: “Her cry fell silent up there in Olinda/ She was such a beautiful woman created by nature/ She was killed in the middle of the night/ with a shotgun blast/ by her lover”.

In addition to activities focused on Carnival, roundtables are held on topics such as domestic violence, parental alienation, sexual and moral harassment. These meetings also function as spaces of support. Therefore, since its inception, the block has acted as an activist-cultural collective, participating in many collective actions. On that, Renata Rodrigues, one of the initiative’s organisers, makes the following statement:

We are very active on social media and in the press too, and this can sometimes be a bit scary, since we are all somewhat exposed personally. I see many of these movements that appeared unpretentiously on social media and then became important spaces of struggle, with a lot of power in recent years. One thing that’s still not being talked about enough is the intersection between some of these minority movements in Rio, involving a diffuse agenda of opposition to the patri-

archy. I see these women joining in the party, in protests and demonstrations, integrating other collectives, and this makes us very proud [...].¹⁴⁸

The multiplication of these minority groups that combine samba and feminism, both inside and outside street carnival, has expanded the presence of these struggles for rights and this protagonism to such an extent that we can say that feminist carnival has gone viral. It has gone viral to the point of raising awareness amongst other groups, actors, and characters in the Rio carnival scene. The partnership between Preta Gil and the cosmetics brand *Quem Disse, Berenice?* brought the topic of “women who inspire” to *Bloco da Preta*’s parade in 2020, inviting representatives from some large female blocks to one of *Bloco da Preta*’s opening ceremonies and processions (Fernandes *et al.*, 2022). The first Rio block formed only by women, *Mulheres de Chico*; the first feminist block, *Mulheres Rodadas*; the young *Bloconcé*, which pays homage to Beyoncé with the motto “*who run the world? Girls!*”; and the musicians from *Samba que Elas Querem*, who joined the parade and recorded, with Preta Gil, a reinterpretation of Chiquinha Gonzaga’s first women-authored Carnival *marchinha* “*Ô Abre Alas*”. According to Preta Gil, whose block gathers more than 300,000 people every year in Rio’s city centre:

I feel in recent years there’s been an increase in the number of women’s groups, in discussions about harassment, about “free bodies”, for example. [...] I see women are more united in the way they approach the issue. Women are no longer sex symbols

¹⁴⁸ Mattos, Gabriela. *O feminismo das redes não inventou o feminismo*. *Pitaya Cultural*, August 28, 2018. (Available at: <<http://pitayacultural.com.br/artes/entrevista-o-feminismo-das-redes-nao-inventou-o-feminismo-diz-coordenadora-do-bloco-mulheres-rodadas>>. Accessed: August 26, 2021).

[...] Women are increasingly owning their voice, their messages, and their right to experience Carnival as they see fit [...] the fact is that no one can hold back the necessary evolution of women's issues. [...] I thought it was time to take this issue to the masses. [...] We paid tribute to all women, but especially to Chiquinha Gonzaga, a woman who was ahead of her time, who fought for the rights and ideals not only of her own, but also those of Black people, musicians, and women. In Rio, we sang an empowered version of *Ô Abre Alas* with women from several women's groups from Rio's Carnival.¹⁴⁹

In the case of the *Samba que Elas Querem* initiative, activities revolve around a samba circle that began in 2017, organised by female musicians and that, according to them, arose from a desire to give women a leading role in Rio's samba scene. They consider their circles a space for female representation where everyone can feel included, especially those from minorities. This cultural collective is made up of eight professionals with a background in music (Angélica Marin, Bárbara Fernandes, Cecília Cruz, Giselle Sorriso, Júlia Ribeiro, Karina Neves, Mariana Solis, and Silvia Duffrayer), who initially gained notoriety by making parodies of sexist samba songs: the most popular parody is the song "*Mulheres*" (written by Martinho da Vila and Toninho Geraes). Starting in 2020, they began to develop a more personal work with the release of three singles: *Levanta Povo*, *Menino Miguel*, and *Partido Inconscient*. The group has been performing in circles and concerts held in the streets, in various concert halls, museums, and foundations. They often opt for hybrid spaces (which are both public and private): in fact, this strategy is related to the construction of

¹⁴⁹ Preta Gil's interview for *Estado de São Paulo's Caderno Mais*, published on February 20, 2020. (Available at: <<https://www.estadao.com.br/emails/gente/ninguem-pode-conter-uma-evolucao-necessaria-das-questoes-femininas-diz-pret-gil/>>. Accessed: March 10, 2020).

a “safe space” that is more protected for women and minorities in general. In this sense, Silvia Duffrayer (who does vocals, percussion, and plays the tambourine in these performances) makes the following comment:

We are very aware of anything that happens at our events. We can't have anyone being attacked or harassed [...] we need to be very alert to any type of violence [...]. And this is a huge responsibility for those who organise a public event; we feel responsible for taking care of everyone, you know? Once, at one of our events, a group of organised fans came in forming a little conga line, and of course there was trouble and confusion. We also have some bouncers who help us in the streets. We need to have that [...]. So far, we have never had any problems with the police. Any of our events being held in the streets, especially in Rio's city centre, must be properly authorised. We very rarely hold smaller events, with more mobility, where it'd be possible to attack or occupy the street. We have already organised some small events with *Slam das Minas*. They have a cool Kombi, which gives us more mobility for this type of cultural activity [...]. It's important to take into account that our audience includes mothers with babies in their arms or sometimes toddlers. These people participate in the circles because they continue to feel safe with us.¹⁵⁰

Regarding the relevance of this music group's work for Rio's feminist activist movement, Duffrayer comments that:

As a group, we celebrated four years in 2021. However, before that, there were already women meeting, exchanging ideas, wanting to occupy those spaces in the streets and in the world

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Silvia Duffrayer, from *Samba que Elas Querem*, given to the authors on August 2, 2021.

of samba [...]. Women were already mobilising, even if they didn't appear to the public in the form of women-led samba circles. There was already *Moça Prosa*, *Só Damas*, and *Bambas de Saia*, which are groups that were active in the 1990s but didn't have much visibility before this last decade. It was a different story, different discourses, where racism was the main topic. Unfortunately, sexism was relegated to the sidelines at the time. Today, after a lot of struggle, some things have improved and we have been gaining space [...]. In our circles, we try to create an environment in which everyone respects each other [...] to create a context of more freedom. Our circles try to establish themselves as a place of respect for diversity, regardless of colour or gender [...]. I myself have publicly stated that the *Samba que Elas Querem* is very powerful because we are completely different women, coming from different places, and with different life stories [...]. It's important to highlight that there's a very active movement of women samba musicians. In fact, the "movement of women samba musicians" managed to establish the Women Samba Musicians' Day in 2021, which was celebrated last month [...]. The fact is that *Samba que Elas Querem* has this activist vision because we're women, but we're not just reduced to that. Of course, we're very committed to the cause of Black and poor women, who resist the oppression of this sexist world. However, we don't lose sight of our focus on poetic and artistic work. Many samba musicians, past and present, are not very feminist and still they've done very cool, creative, and innovative work. It's very exciting to be able to discuss and address different audiences. I recognise there's a lot of politics in what we do. However, we're women artists before being activists. As I mentioned before, there are several groups that have formed and are modelling themselves on us. This is very beautiful and feeds back into our work.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ *Idem*. Women Samba Musicians' Day (April 13th) is seen as an achievement by the movement. It was officially established nationally (as a tribute to Dona Ivone, born on

In addition to their samba circles, the group acts as an activist collective that has been promoting live streams and online roundtables on various topics, especially those involving gender and ethnic-racial issues. Evidently, these online events have become more frequent during the Covid-19 pandemic and have become part of these activists' routines.

In sum, despite facing a more adverse context in the last seven years in Brazil, the vast majority of women who participate in these collectives have been promoting demonstrations that reinvent the world of samba circles and street carnival. In fact, these initiatives have increasingly attracted more people than the blocks and circles led by men: female protagonism has renovated the presence of younger participants and, in general, people who identify with a political agenda that more consistently incorporates the demands of LGBTQIA+ minorities. In the survey conducted with attendees of these events, many of them highlighted that they started to attend more regularly because not only did they feel more “welcomed” and/or “comfortable” in environments run by women (many of whom are supporters of a more fluid, less binary sexual position), but they also feel more satisfied listening to and dancing to music that does not have a generally discriminatory tone (an embarrassing situation that is experienced with some frequency when listening to many traditional samba and carnival songs). In other words, many of the interviewees highlighted the pleasure of being at events that ban songs that promote, more or

this date) in 2021 (Law 2517/21). Gathered by the shared objective of expanding and consolidating space for women in Rio's samba scene, the actors who work in the *Movimento das Mulheres Sambistas* seek to consolidate an important instance in favour of women's struggles for equality and respect. For more on the movement, see the following Facebook page: <<https://www.facebook.com/MovimentodasMulheresSambistas>>. Accessed on: January 24, 2022.

less explicitly, sexist, racist, homophobic, or even transphobic points of view.¹⁵²

These samba musicians astutely and creatively resignify/remix/sample: a) the dynamics of the city that generally impose obstacles for women (seeking to build “safe spaces” in public spaces, launching manifestos); b) their bodies (bodies strengthened by “alliances” and intersectionalities) become “protagonists”, taking over all the instruments, which they play with freely, almost as “*potentia gaudendi*” [Preciado, 2018]); c) and, finally, they frequently appropriate excerpts from song lyrics, putting their feminist (or post-feminist) agenda articulated with gender (and post-gender) issues on the agenda. In this regard, Fabiola Machado, musician of the pioneering *Roda Moça Prosa*, comments:

We took as a reference for our proposal the samba circle of the group *Só Damas*, which performed in the suburbs of Rio [...]. We are celebrating ten years of activity and we were the first group to form a female street samba circle [...]. We have always been concerned with playing music that doesn't diminish women, and this has had a great impact [...]. Today we have active and respected female circles, but a lot still needs to change and improve. There's still a lot of struggles ahead [...] we still need to address many issues [...]. The circles led by women are embracing issues from other minorities, especially LGBTQIA+ [...]. The growth of these circles indicates that

¹⁵² Researcher João Grand Junior, who has extensive and important research on the samba circles' circuit in Rio, points out that “[...] in the circles led by women there's a relevant process of renewal of the audiences that began to attend these cultural events, especially younger ones who identify with queer issues and culture” (interview with João Grand Junior, geographer and researcher in the Creative Economy, given to the authors on August 11, 2022).

women no longer want to be supporting actors and want to tell their own stories [...].¹⁵³

Another relevant aspect that can be observed in the world of female street samba in Rio is that, in general, there is a body attitude and narrative that seeks to reinforce the construction of a more collective and cohesive body. Thus, the proxemics and body agglomerations of the participants (of the circles and processions) or the mention of expressions that are very much in vogue – “if you mess with one of us, you mess with all of us” (referring to gender violence), “not one fewer” (referring to daily femicide) or “no one lets go of anyone else’s hand” (indicating the risk of attacks on human rights or on citizens) – frequently appear interspersed amongst the stories sung and used in this cultural universe.

In fact, the “body in performance” (Fernandes *et al.*, 2018) is an important key to understanding the relationships between artists, audiences, and the spaces in which they perform. These bodies in action in urban spaces create environments capable of subverting the spatial-social-temporal logics of places. Gestures, voice intonation, and proxemics with the audience enhance sensitive interactions capable of transmuting territories (of the body and the city) through playfulness and theatricalisation. That way, the sets of gestures, memories (which are expressed in poetic and discursive ways), and the music to which the bodies perform (sensitively mapping the space) – founding “places” guided by “dissensual initiatives” (Rancière, 1996) that aim to promote “molecular revolutions” (Guattari, 1977) – are considered as relevant expressions capable not only of altering urban imaginaries, but also of enabling the elaboration of powerful “sonic-musical territorialities”

¹⁵³ Interview with musician Fabiola Machado, from group *Moça Prosa*, given to the authors on July 27, 2022.

(Herschmann & Fernandes 2014). These gestures and expressions manifest and materialise a “desire for change” in dissensual bodies, which can be potentially converted into a kind of possible “becoming” (Guattari, 1977) that could be one of the starting points for the (re) construction of more supportive and democratic cities.

Here are two brief final remarks in this chapter. First, these activists end up building refuges and hubs of resistance, which try to resignify the world from the inside out through musical agency. They are “sonic-musical territorialities” (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014) that envisage possible worlds. When in contact with these cultural expressions of youth, one can also observe how much “love” – in its Spinozian, more communal, and political sense (Hardt & Negri, 2009) – has become utterly necessary in a country more divided by intolerance, since what these activist or “artist” practices (Raposo, 2015; Semova, 2019) seek is the strengthening of a more collective spirit. In short, the “act of loving the other” acquires a more political meaning in times marked by hatred.

The second remark that requires attention is the relevance of dissensus (Rancière, 2009) produced in these circles, which produce relevant “flashes” (Did-Huberman, 2011) in the urban space, in often gloomy environments. If the molecular dynamics of these circles share a type of sensitivity of what is “common”, they also make evident what is left out: “favouring the dynamics of sharing, that which is of the political order and not of the police order” (Rancière, 1996, p. 72). Thus, on the borders of this “distribution of the sensible” (Rancière, 2009), alternative dissensual (and political) scenes are created that confront what is established as the common, demonstrating that there are ruptures, fissures of meaning in what is perceived as immutable or naturalised. This perspective is valid for us to understand the political power of the experience of “Rio’s street music culture”: these artistic expressions indicate the existence of controversies and disagreements

in the forms of inserting (or excluding) as well as the processes of (re) signification of bodies in Rio.

Therefore, it is in this sense that these gatherings emerge as temporary sonic-musical territories, through which it is possible to investigate the less visible uses of the city. If, on the one hand, the traditional financial and technocratic planning of the city attempts to regulate the rhythms and urban spaces to foster capital, on the other, the street and its “molecular” dynamics can present alternative scenes that escape this functionalist and exclusionary logic, investing in policies of sociability and coming together – that is, in festive spaces of protection and expression of “urban activism” (Fernandes *et al.*, 2022), as in the case of the small musical events analysed here. In short, the world of women’s samba in Rio suggests relevant aesthetic-political dynamics of a city that aims to be more democratic (which continues to attract and welcome countless types of minority social groups) – highlighting a cultural diversity beyond the “postcard” of the globalised, cosmopolitan city –, which “resists” being simply reduced in the imagination as a location that is almost exclusively identified with entertainment and elitist tourism, with predominantly heteronormative aesthetic standards, and, finally, with social divisions and “urban violence” (which would therefore call for an immediate ramp-up in surveillance and police repression). In short, it is worth emphasising once again the importance of the processes of redefining everyday life and urban spaces. It is clear that women’s collectives promote “(re) territorialisations” (Haesbert, 2010) and heterotopic experiences that have a significant presence in updating urban imaginaries as well as in appreciating gender and post-gender issues.

3. Paraty – beyond the city of festivals¹⁵⁴

*My village has come round
Coveted dream,
Golden glow, to conquer
I followed your charms, came blue and white
I found the “Jazida do Mar”
Land desired by pirates
Native and nature in communion
Portuguese faith and interests
Black sweat of slavery
It’s the Vila on the way to gold [...]
In the compass, the trace and a people
That built freedom in its place
A paradise of natural wealth
That preserves traditions
And “aligns” itself with transformations
The peace of the hippies finding a home
Love, its flag
It’s also a Brazilian Venice
So much beauty in Paraty
I got drunk and went out
Uniting the soul of Carnival
To a heritage of world history*

(excerpt from the samba song by *Unidos de Vila Isabel* from 2004
entitled *A Vila é Para Ti*, written by André Diniz)

¹⁵⁴We would like to thank Flavia Magalhães Barroso, Taíza Moraes, Maria Eugênia L. da Silva, and Michelle Ezaquiel for their collaboration in carrying out the empirical research in the city of Paraty.

In addition to the “creative city” label (in the gastronomy category) won in 2017, the Paraty region was also recognised by Unesco as one of “mixed heritage” – cultural and natural – of humanity in 2019. The recognition was extended to Ilha Grande and the Atlantic Forest of Serra da Bocaina.¹⁵⁵ How should we interpret the following article in a major Brazilian media outlet? How should we assess the fact that Ilha Grande was awarded the title of “city of gastronomy” by Unesco in 2017?

By combining innovation and culture, cities in various corners of the world are reinventing themselves based on their history and vocation, and attracting the *crème de la crème* of creativity. In Brazil, the highlights are Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Paraty, and Guaramiranga [...]. Considered a mecca for cultural events in the country [...], for several years now, between July and August, the city of Paraty has been experiencing a literary effervescence with FLIP [...]. Walking through the historic streets of Paraty today is like stepping back in time [...], the city lived through the glory of the gold rush, spent almost a century in isolation and, in the 1960s, was then a haven for intellectuals, only to open up to tourism once and for all.¹⁵⁶

Could the city of Paraty be a rare case – not only amongst Brazilian cities, but also amongst small, countryside ones – in which a national city has actually managed to consolidate itself as a successful “creative city” (Reis, 2012), capable of building a sustainable and balanced territory?

¹⁵⁵ In South America, only Machu Picchu and the Rio Abiseo National Park (both in Peru) are also recognised as mixed heritage sites by Unesco.

¹⁵⁶ Achcar, Tatiana. *As cidades mais criativas do Brasil*. Época Negócios (Available: <<http://epocanegocios.globo.com/Revista/Common/0,,EMI192544-16642,00-AS+CIDADES+-MAIS+CRIATIVAS+DO+BRASIL.html>>, Accessed: October 12, 2018).

3.1 From the city of religious festivities to the city of festivals

Vila de Nossa Senhora dos Remédios de Paraty was founded in 1597 and is located in the Costa Verde region on the south coast of the state of Rio de Janeiro, 248 kilometres from the capital. Covering an area of 933km², the city has almost 40,000 inhabitants (the latest IBGE data available is from 2014) and borders the cities of Angra dos Reis, Ubatuba, and Cunha. The main access is via the BR-101 (Rio-Santos) motorway. The city also has an airstrip for helicopters and small aeroplanes only. Since the mid-1960s, the entire municipality of Paraty has been listed as a national heritage site.¹⁵⁷

Focusing the analysis on the city's most recent cycles of growth, almost all the actors emphasise the period of "Paraty's isolation" (for approximately 60 years) as one of the "secrets" of the city's current development.¹⁵⁸ Unlike other nearby towns that have modernised as a result of Paraty's oblivion, the town has kept – due to a long process of urban stagnation – a large part of its colonial buildings, which were listed in the 1960s and reconfigured to make them more attractive to meet the growing demands of cultural tourism.¹⁵⁹ Despite

¹⁵⁷ In general, the specialised literature consulted (on history, urbanism, and tourism) indicates that the main factors behind the town's development were: first, the gold, sugar, and coffee cycles that ran until the 19th century; and later, throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, the construction of the Paraty-Cunha road, the opening of the BR-101 motorway, the process of "patrimonialization" (the process of listing), and finally the dynamics of "touristification" of the locality (Nogueira, 2011; Paes, 2015; Axer 2009; Ferreira *et al.*, 2011; Marcelo, 2011; Cruz, 2016).

¹⁵⁸ The abolition of the slave trade, the opening of the railways, and the shifting of the coffee-axis production to São Paulo and the countryside of Rio de Janeiro led to the abandonment of Caminho Velho, deepening Paraty's isolation, which lasted from the end of the 19th century until the opening of the Paraty-Cunha road in the mid-1950s (Axer, 2009).

¹⁵⁹ According to Paes, despite the fact that the city – since the 1970s – assumes that 80% of its territory is Atlantic Forest and biological diversity preservation areas, the long

the enormous economic potential of Paraty (and its surroundings)¹⁶⁰ numerous authors point out as evidence of its imbalance the fact that the city concentrates a large part of its high-profile activities and public investment in the Centro Histórico area.¹⁶¹

With the opening of the Paraty-Cunha road and, later, the BR-101 (Rio-Santos motorway), Paraty slowly began to experience a process of growth in the influx of spontaneous tourists and, at the same time, the construction of an incipient infrastructure. The religious festivals (such as *Divino*, *Semana Santa*, *Santa Rita*, and *Nossa Senhora dos Remédios*) that continued to be celebrated in the city (Souza, 2008), together with the listing and restoration of historic architecture (the latter organised through a partnership with the Roberto Marinho Foundation in the 1970s and 1980s), boosted tourism and allowed it to be built up.

It created an attractive setting, an environment with great potential for cultural tourism (Nogueira, 2011), which required local leaders and authorities from then on to start planning a tourism project for

delay by Unesco – since the 1980s - in approving the region as a World Heritage Site is an indication that there are major imbalances detected in the region that are difficult to overcome, especially in populous and poor neighbourhoods such as Ilha das Cobras and Mangueira (Paes, 2015).

¹⁶⁰The annual flow of tourists is estimated at around 300,000 people a year, the vast majority of whom have high purchasing power. In fact, Paraty is amongst the Brazilian cities that receive the most foreign tourists. In addition to cultural, maritime, and ecological tourism, the town's main activities are: fishing, commerce in general, liquor, agriculture (bananas, manioc, sugar cane), handicrafts, and olericulture (American pepper, ginger, aubergine, cambuci, peppers, corn). As well as having natural attractions (such as waterfalls, beaches, islands, reserves, and parks), the city has historical (more than four hundred 300-year-old buildings located in the Centro Histórico, remnants of the Gold Trail) and cultural elements, such as traditional festivals (see Ferreira *et al.*, 2011).

¹⁶¹In specialised literature, we find excerpts from the actors' testimonies in which they state that they feel excluded most of the time and that they participate, at best, as mere spectators at some of the cultural events that have characterised the city's recent growth cycles.

the region (an aspect that is easily identified in the growing number of management and master plans being drawn up, or even in the various studies commissioned for the region).¹⁶²

If the religious festivals, combined with the natural beauty of the region, initially boosted the tourism chain (Mello & Souza, 2008; Barbosa & Oliveira, 2017), local actors are almost unanimous in pointing out that the creation of the Paraty Literary Festival in 2003 was a milestone, a kind of “watershed” moment for the city, in its conversion into the “city of festivals”. In their testimonies, the actors repeatedly point out that it is the event that most mobilises change in Paraty (based on a socio-cultural agenda and the Centro Histórico are taken as the setting for the festival). Capable of mobilising an average of 25,000 visitors and bringing the city’s hotel occupancy to effectively 100%, everything seems to suggest that Flip was the main event that gave Paraty national and international fame and projection¹⁶³, allowing it to reposition the territory’s branding within a globalised market of municipal cultural mega-events.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² See: Turisrio, 2003 and Plano de Gestão, 2008, Câmara Municipal, 2004.

¹⁶³ The Literary Festival has been organised by the Casa Azul Association since 2003. Lasting five days (usually in July), the programme brings together debates and talks on literature with nationally and internationally recognised authors, achieving nationwide exposure through strong media coverage. The idea for the festival is attributed to English publisher Liz Calder, who, in contact with Mauro Munhoz, the current president of the Casa Azul Association, came up with the idea of creating a literary festival in the city. Other literature festivals around the world have been successful, the best known of which, and which served as a model for the creation of Flip, is Hay-on-Wye, held in Wales (Ferreira *et al.*, 2011).

¹⁶⁴ Of course, in previous editions, there were numerous criticisms of the imbalances promoted in Paraty by the high influx of visitors (excessive rubbish, decline in the quality of public services, etc.), but at the same time it should also be noted that the organisers are trying to somewhat territorialise Flip, with initiatives such as: reserving a percentage of the tickets (at a different price) for local residents to have the opportunity to attend the roundtables and debates with the artists; and the initiatives to organise – simultaneously to the main event – “Flipinha” (a space with programming for children and schools in

Flip was a milestone for the city. I think that, since the first Flip, which was in 2003, the way the city dealt with festivals and tourism has changed completely. Other festivals had already taken place here; there had been religious music festivals and choirs, but none of them took place on the same scale and dynamism. Today Paraty is undoubtedly the country's city of festivals [...]. We want Paraty to stay that way, but events need to leave legacies for the local population, offer courses, and parallel activities. The team at the Casa de Cultura has been fighting for this in recent years [...]. There's a question that's been mobilising us a lot today: how do we balance and support the festivals that are put on by local residents – which is very important – with the festivals that come from elsewhere?¹⁶⁵

the region). The *Cirandas de Paraty* educational programme (created by the Casa Azul Association) is responsible for the creation of Flipinha in 2004, which is a children's and youth programme within the main event of the Paraty International Literary Festival. The aim is to include the local community in the event. One of the fruits of this programme is *Biblioteca Azul* ("Blue Library"), the first children's library to be set up in the city, which currently holds around 8,000 children's books donated by publishers, writers, and other bookworms. In general, during the Flipinha programme, public-school students produce work related to the characters and authors of the books (Axeir, 2009). In addition to this initiative, there is also the "FlipZona" (a space with activities aimed at young people), which has been carrying out important educational work in the municipality. The proposal seeks to combine culture, education, and technology. Since its inception in 2009, its programme has involved schoolchildren from Paraty and the region, with theoretical and practical activities taking place during the Literary Festival. FlipZona was created to bring young people closer to the worlds of literature and journalism through new media. With a focus on audiovisual production, it promotes convergence between literature, local cultural heritage, new technologies, and social networks (Axeir, 2009).

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Rafael Moreira, superintendent of the Casa de Cultura, given to the authors on October 11, 2018.

3.2 Actors signalling challenges and perspectives for change

Throughout the interviews with actors, even amongst the most critical, there was a general acknowledgement that progressive sectors associated with the City Secretary of Culture have been trying to develop public policies that are more comprehensive and that include the interests and demands of the local population. In this sense, the then Secretary of Culture, Cristina Mazedo, summarised the axes of these policies that were being implemented as follows:

Talking to the current mayor's team, we redrew the priorities for the city. At the time, my team and I suggested moving forward in two areas, taking as our focus a survey of young people carried out by the Youth Coordination Office via social media and WhatsApp. The first is to focus on young people, so every cultural policy is aimed at young people. And then there is investing in the creative economy, the great local vocation. So, we suggested that the axes of action should be youth and the creative economy. We need to look at the city and think about what we can do to include the younger population. The questions that guided us were: what are the priority actions so that we can make culture the main driver for generating income and employment? How can people, especially young people, make a decent living from culture? These are some of the guidelines set out in the multi-year plan. We are constantly emphasising to the other secretariats the importance of creative economies and young people. We've managed to significantly increase the budget of the Department of Culture and we're pushing ahead with the project to create a Vocational Training Centre, where we hope to meet most of the demands of young people and the population at large. Our idea is to build a space where young people can be welcomed and professionally

trained, and also act as an incubator: the idea is to give full support to all local creative initiatives.¹⁶⁶

One of the relevant actions to bring young people closer together implemented by the city council in recent years was the creation of the Municipal Coordination of Public Policies for Youth:

We submitted an action project to the city council and managed to get approval for the creation of the City Coordination of Public Policies for Youth in the city. This was a major turning point for local youth. The council body has been in existence for almost a year now and our aim is to mediate the interests of young people and local institutions, especially by liaising with the city council departments [...]. I can see that we've made progress in a short time in the process of destigmatising some youth groups. The city's rap, rhyme, and skateboarding groups, for example, which used to be harassed by the Municipal Guard, now have a channel of intermediation with the creation of the Youth Coordination. They contact us to mediate and negotiate their right to perform in the city – a lot of progress has been made [...]. Of course, the Youth coordination Office wants to help the collectives, but there's often a certain pleasure in their rebelliousness and civil disobedience. I understand and respect the position of these more radical collectives. My role here is to try to humanise and democratise public policies aimed at young people. We've just finished mapping the youth of Paraty, which I hope will guide the actions that the coördinator and the city council want to promote in coming years. Unlike a dead-end past, I believe today Paraty is experiencing greater cultural effervescence amongst the city's young people, that there are more university graduates who want to invest and

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Cristina Mazedá, City Secretary of Culture, given to the authors on March 25, 2018.

transform the city into a more democratic space with better quality of life. I think the Vocational Training Centre project can help to keep young people in the city, creating alternatives that go beyond the tourism chain, valuing their cultural activities, giving them the opportunity to experiment and live off these activities.¹⁶⁷

In spite of the efforts and more democratic and mediating initiatives, even the city government technicians admit that they have not managed to fully include the young people of Paraty. In this regard, Marcos Maffei makes the following self-critical remark:

In fact, in a way, the young people who play music on the streets, in slams and hip hop, already have a relationship with the Secretary of Culture. Some of the kids in these circles were or are music students at the Casa de Cultura, but we haven't yet managed to forge a more permanent partnership with them. Of course, we want to try to integrate these young people into our initiatives and be more receptive to their demands.¹⁶⁸

In this sense, we identified in various statements that artists and young people (who organise music and rhyme circles in Paraty) slyly or explicitly criticise not only the lack of support from the public authorities, but also the interventions and even interdictions imposed by public-security agents, especially in the the city's most popular areas (such as Centro Histórico and surrounding areas), in order to comply with the planning rules agreed with National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute (Iphan).

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Lucas Cordeiro, local councillor and former city Coordinator of Youth Public Policies, given to the authors on July 20, 2018.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Marcus Maffei, Music Coordinator at Paraty's Casa de Cultura, given to the authors on March 25, 2018.

We have a social project to occupy the street, the *Roda de Rima da Praça da Bandeira*, which has taken place every Thursday since mid-2017, and now we're doing it fortnightly. And recently we've had difficulties, because twice in a row the police have come and stopped us, treated us badly and demanded that we leave. Unfortunately, we don't have much support from the public authorities and we have to deal with restrictive city-planning rules. Despite these adversities, we've managed to organise several editions [...]. At first there were some misunderstandings, people thought we were trying to occupy the space of the rap circles that were already taking place in the city [...]. Our circle is growing and the meetings have been a great party. We're looking to reformulate and come back with a bigger business, not least because we've bought equipment to record music as well. From the beginning, our intention with this project and circle was to unite the local street scene, because we know the city has a lot of art [...], from indigenous crafts to jazz, from samba to hip hop. There's a lot of good stuff nobody from outside is getting to see because of the lack of structure and support.¹⁶⁹

Esquina do Rap began in the *hood* with people putting their speakers up, sticking them together, exchanging ideas, and just hanging in the streets. It started spontaneously and then local rap groups began to emerge. *Esquina do Rap* is a social project aimed at the community and the issues in our city [...]. Paraty is experiencing a very interesting cultural moment with an interesting street scene [...]. We took part in calls for proposals such as *Paraty Presente* with the *Férias na Pista* project and it was very important [...]. Then we launched *Férias na Rua*, which is a similar project. The occupation we did of the cinema space (which is now being restored and refurbished) was also

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Lucas Salvati, one of the organisers of the *Roda de Rima da Praça da Bandeira*, given to the authors on March 27, 2018.

very good and mobilised a large number of young people from the city [...]. Our street movement is suffering from the Iphan decree and the bans. We'd love to legalise everything by getting permits and authorisations [...]. And lately, the government hasn't been giving the attention and support it should to the youth street movement. At the moment we're afraid to organise the circles, because the police could arrive at any moment and take the equipment, we've spent so much on [...].¹⁷⁰

In April 2017, we started our slams here in Paraty. It's open to anyone who wants to come and battle, just sign up and take part. [...]. We started doing the circles at the coach station, which welcomed us [...]. Before, nobody liked going to the coach station. And the second floor of the coach station is a nice place; it has a garden, organised kiosks. We decided to occupy it with great difficulty, but we're trying to develop the *Slam de Quinta* activities there. From time to time, we have some tension when a police officer shows up, but we continue to resist [...].¹⁷¹

Even musicians who play in the tourism chain within the bar and restaurant circuit complain about the restrictions imposed by Iphan and city regulations.

Being a musician and living in Paraty has some positive aspects and, unfortunately, some that aren't so positive. One of the positive aspects is the fact that the city offers opportunities for exchanges with people from all over the world and, from these meetings, various interesting cultural projects are born. On the other hand, there is a great difficulty in the city in being able to

¹⁷⁰ Interview with Daniel Lima, one of the organisers of *Esquina do Rap*, given to the authors on October 10, 2017.

¹⁷¹ Interview with Brisa de Souza, one of the organisers of *Slam de Quinta*, given to the authors on March 25, 2018.

showcase artistic work, especially in public spaces. Fortunately, musicians and artists are unable to express themselves freely, without fear of infringing quiet hours, the rule banning the streets and pavements of Centro Histórico [...]. Almost all of them are afraid of possible police intervention and complaints from residents.¹⁷²

Another fact that caught our attention when we were following *Festival Mimo* in 2017 was a movement of activist musicians who occupied the city in parallel during the event, protesting against the concentration of public policy support and resources on major events.

Many musicians who come here think there's a job market here and try to organise a local scene, mobilising bands and artists, but it's not that simple. There are many interests working in the other direction. The city is organised around big events and a cultural calendar that is geared almost exclusively towards the tourism industry. Generally, the musicians who are honoured are those who are well-regarded by the Department of Culture or Tourism. There are many good people who are left out of the city's tourism chain. We decided to organise this occupation during Mimo to show there are many people who feel excluded in the city and who produce wealth here. There are many artists who are in the streets selling handicrafts, the people who are producing and selling their honey and cheese and who want to be in Centro Histórico, which is where the money is in the city. Unfortunately, there isn't much dialogue with public authorities. For many musicians, when the hostel circuit came along, it was very important because it opened up a market for them to take part in festivals, but even that is not a lot. It was a circuit that, whilst it worked out, was very

¹⁷² Interview with Claudia Ribeiro, from group *Mundiá*, given to the authors on March 23, 2018.

good and allowed talented and lesser-known artists to show a bit of their work. For some time now, the city council and the police have made it difficult to organise these festivals, they don't understand this is positive for the city's cultural life. This occupation during Mimo is to denounce the fact we have no space in the city and the calendar organised exclusively for the tourism industry. In short, we have no way of showing our work unless we subject ourselves to taking part in the traditional tourism chain [...].¹⁷³

The possibility of creating an alternative youth party circuit, despite being well received by the public, has also suffered from the bans imposed, even though the events and parties are held in the private venues in the city's hostels. About that, cultural producer Newmar Bowlins makes some enlightening comments.

The proposal for Casa Viva arose from a need to entertain the younger tourists who visit the city more, right? For example, if you look carefully at Paraty: apart from the festivals, at night there are only bars in the city centre. You'll only find restaurants, guitar, and singing. Very traditional concerts. The people in the hostels came together because we felt the local cultural agenda was missing something. And that way, for a while, we were able to mobilise the city's artists and musicians, who don't have the space to play in the tourism industry. These hostel events are also where people can show their more original work. These parties target the more alternative young crowd and alternative tourism. The musical styles were very varied at the parties [...]. We were organising gigs and parties on Tuesdays and Saturdays at Casa Viva. There were also other places like Hostel Canguru, where we had parties every Friday,

¹⁷³ Interview with Rogério Fortunato, local musician, given to the authors on October 9, 2017.

and there was also Bossa Nova, which we had on Wednesdays. The sad thing is that, unfortunately, they can't do it anymore because the city government has banned it [...]. The truth is that the relationship with the government has always been very complicated. It's complicated because the legislation itself is very confusing and contradictory. So, in order to get a licence, there's so much bureaucracy that it makes these activities unfeasible. We've been waiting for authorisations for several months now, and so far nothing. You realise that a lot of powerful people in the city don't want this alternative and youth circuit to take place. We continue to do it, from time to time, without a licence [...]. But that's not our intention, because these parties could benefit everyone, generating jobs and new entertainment options [...].¹⁷⁴

Although many city technicians are not open about this, many of them fear that this young music scene will jeopardise the heritage and landmark status that the city has achieved so far (and which has underpinned cultural tourism in recent decades) and/or will result in unruly occupation of public spaces. Therefore, they covertly support the restrictions imposed by Iphan and, in general, by the public authorities.¹⁷⁵

The Iphan does a necessary job of preserving the local heritage. I recognise it's a boring role, charging and supervising the uses of Centro Histórico, but it's very important and expensive for the city. We need to prevent cultural heritage from being de-characterised or degraded. [...] The case of young people who can't get licences and can't hold their parties and circles is

¹⁷⁴ Interview with Newmar Bowlins, one of the organisers of the Casa Viva Hostel parties, given to the authors on October 10, 2017.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Lucineide Silva, City Secretary of Tourism, given to the authors on July 19, 2018.

related to abuses in the use of public spaces and the holding of initiatives that sometimes don't respect quiet hours. We have the example of the *Samba da Benção* circle, which has been allowed to occupy the streets of Centro Histórico for some years now. It's a circle that's enjoyed and attended by many in Paraty. We need to take into account the various aspects involved in organising and regulating public spaces. Perhaps if young people occupied the streets and held nightly events with less excess, the result would be different and they would have the support of authorities and institutions.¹⁷⁶

Another social segment of the creative sector that demands space in Centro Histórico are indigenous artisans, who often sell their products almost clandestinely in the streets of the city. Regarding the conflicts between the interests of the population and those of the tourism chain, the well-known musician Luís Perequê makes the following comments:

Representatives of local authorities should separate local cultural traditions and events more from touristic cultural products when developing their policies for the city [...]. We often don't realise it, but cultural practices require extended time that capital and tourism hardly allow [...]. The work of training musicians and celebrating and appreciating local culture is often incompatible with the frenetic pace of business exploitation. In fact, the entrepreneur who is solely dedicated to the tourism chain exploits not only the tourists, but mainly the poor local residents [...]. Of course, a lot has improved in recent decades (this must be recognised), with the interests of the population being taken into account more often [...], but we need to pay attention to those issues [...]. In my opinion, the city's music and cultural circles could be supported, as

¹⁷⁶ *Idem.*

long as their commercial aspects are removed, which would make these small events into street concerts. In other words, as long as there are no conflicts between the circles and the city's commercial interests (and there often are unfortunately), they could get support and authorisations, as cultural events that can play a relevant social role, and the local population obviously demands a lot of that.¹⁷⁷

In this sense, the *Samba da Benção* circle is an exception in the history of movements in Paraty's public spaces and is often referred to by various actors as a "model occupation", which is carried out under authorisations from the city government (or at least with the acquiescence of some local political leaders). One of the organisers of this circle, Fernando Rás, makes a few comments.

We started the circle in January 2016. It was important at the time, because the music scene went into crisis with the bans on loudspeakers and the prohibitions on occupying the city's public spaces. Fortunately, we managed to find a loophole and support from local political leaders. We got in touch with Iphan's technicians and they authorised a circle to be held outside the Santa Rita Church. The idea was to create a movement amongst the people who were already playing in Paraty. With the support of some important people in the city, we managed to get this event authorised [...]. Of course, at first the police disturbed things a bit and questioned our authorisation [...]. Nowadays, nobody bothers us about it anymore and they support the circle [...]. So we're still going strong, because the aim of *Samba da Benção* has always been to serve the local population, who have Mondays off because they work in the

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Luis Perequê, local musician, given to the authors on July 6, 2022.

tourism industry [...]. After all, everyone has the right to have fun too, don't they?¹⁷⁸

In addition to this circle, another musical initiative that is widely supported – not least because it is part of the logic of heritage for tourism – are the activities of *Ciranda de Paraty*. Maffei makes some enlightening comments in this regard:

Ciranda de Paraty is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. We recently supported the reconstruction of Ciranda's headquarters in Tarituba (a neighbouring village). We've been trying to help renew this musical tradition in the city. Casa da Cultura and the City Department of Culture have even created the *Ciranda nas Escolas* project. There really is this problem that the elders have aged and are all, sadly, passing away. Few young people are trying to keep this local tradition alive. Plus, the city government is promoting the registration of *ciranda* (separate from *fandango*), in the form of safeguarding, with Iphan. The wealth of Paraty is that it's a city that ranges from the regional to the cosmopolitan. In Paraty, you'll find everything from the traditional *Festa do Divino* to the cosmopolitan Flip, with events to honour some big shot or the Nobel Prize for Literature.¹⁷⁹

Unlike the musical activities that young people want to develop in Paraty and which are repressed (and which seem to be in growing in demand), *ciranda* – considered the most traditional musical expression in the region – has been going through a deep crisis for several years, especially due to the lack of new people amongst the *cirandeiros*

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Felipe Rás, one of the organisers of *Samba da Benção* circle, given to the authors on March 25, 2018.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Marcus Maffei, Music Coördinator at Paraty's *Casa de Cultura*, given to the authors on March 25, 2018.

(elder musicians) and the difficulties in forming audiences interested in consuming this genre.¹⁸⁰

The observations of SESC Paraty's director, Marcos Henrique Rego, seem to summarise the impasses experienced in the city and the difficulties in developing more inclusive public policies.

The city lives off tourism, its main source of income, but there's no data to guide the actions of managers in the region. The city has an official calendar, which is guided towards this production chain; everything that's done here is the expression of an attempt to attract people to the region, often these actions are carried out to the detriment of the more local people's interests [...]. Everything done here is directed towards Centro Histórico, and this space is impressively the icing on the cake.

¹⁸⁰ Fernando Albino Alcântara, one of the few young people involved in *ciranda* in the city, comments: "[...] *Ciranda* here in Paraty is present at various moments in the lives of local people, at various festivals. You come here for the *Festa do Divino* and you'll find *ciranda* – at the medicine festival too, or even at the Santa Rita Festival. We used to have more, but now the elders are getting very old. I've only recently started playing myself [...]. We've had some very interesting musical experiences. For example, *ciranda elétrica* was a group that introduced bass, guitar, and drums. In 2014, we had the guts to create a group just for kids to play traditional *ciranda* [...]. The history of *ciranda* is intertwined with the history of the city. Just as Paraty has to preserve its material heritage, the landscape, the architecture of Centro Histórico [...], *ciranda* is an intangible asset that has also remained [...]. With the growth of the city's festivals, *ciranda* was invited less and less, and the musicians felt discarded. Nowadays, however, interest in Caçara culture is returning. There is now more investment in Caçara cultural heritage. Although it's similar to the Caçara *fandango* (which has already been registered as intangible heritage by Iphan in other cities), *ciranda* here has many particularities. We're in the process of creating a dossier for *Ciranda de Paraty* and presenting it for Iphan's approval [...]. Here we have the *Cirandeiros de Paraty*, which is my group, and in partnership with *Casa de Cultura*, we're taking *ciranda* to schools on a regular basis. We really want to keep this tradition alive [...]. The idea behind this partnership is to pass on this Caçara music culture to the kids, in young people's language. We've created our own teaching method, which is different from the previous one, the one practised by the elders, and it's had incredible results over the last few years". (Interview with Fernando Albino de Alcântara, *Ciranda* musician, given to the authors on October 7, 2017).

It should help to generate dividends for the whole region, but unfortunately it doesn't work like that [...]. Since we arrived in the city a few years ago, SESC has made a great effort to support projects proposed by the local population, especially in deprived areas and in the periphery. We have some very interesting initiatives here, from indigenous rap to the traditional *ciranda*. We have some concerns that aren't on the mayor's radar. No one says anything about it, but, for example, *Quilombo do Campinho* is incredible, it has great historical importance for the region. It's the oldest documented *quilombo* in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The problem with this location is that the *quilombo* is currently suffering a great deal of violence as a result of the advance of Evangelicalism. Sociocultural issues like this need to be mediated, and we at SESC are trying to help. Despite some efforts to democratise policies which need to be recognised and celebrated, the main focus of public authorities continues to be not only on the activities that are concentrated in Centro Histórico, but also on increasing the tourism model that has existed in the region for decades.¹⁸¹

3.3 Festivals and musical practices as strategies for relevant local development

Paraty has re-positioned its territorial branding (Reis, 2012), inserting itself on the international map of major globalised events and festivals with the huge success of the Literary Festival. There are therefore tangible results that guide and legitimise the public policies that have been adopted so far in the region. Today, the city hosts at least 12 major events (one for each month of the year), three of which are amongst the most important and prestigious music festivals in the

¹⁸¹ Interview with Marcos Henrique Rego, SESC Paraty's director, given to the authors on October 6, 2017.

country: *Bourbon*, *Circuito SESC de Jazz*, and *Mimo*.¹⁸² In fact, analysing the results achieved by cultural events shows that they result in a significant increase in the tourism production chain, which allows Paraty to maintain an average annual occupancy rate of approximately 70%, figures that place this city amongst the highest tourism earners in the country. According to the city's Secretary of Tourism:

[...] as Paraty is well known all over the world, it suffers less from the seasonality that characterises smaller towns [...]. We have tourists all year round, from all corners of Brazil and the world [...]. Of course, we've been affected by the crisis in the country, but, in general, the city's revenue has doubled in the last five years.¹⁸³

In addition, as we mentioned earlier, Paraty has been recognised as a “creative city of gastronomy” (for the excellence of Caiçara cuisine) and as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Several other events on the municipal calendar use music as a fundamental ingredient to increase the sociability of the festivities and mobilise artists. There is an awareness on the part of the city's technical staff that music is not only an important “driving force” (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014) for tourism in the city, but that it also represents an alternative to major events, an opportunity to capillarise and become more en-

¹⁸² *Bourbon Festival Paraty* entered the official calendar of the state of Rio de Janeiro in 2008, organised by the Ministry of Culture. It was devised and produced by the Bourbon Street Music Club (by producer Edgard Radesca in various Brazilian cities), with the support of Paraty's city government. *Festival Mimo* was created in 2004 by Lu Araújo (also artistic director and owner of Lu Araújo Produções) and is another important music festival in the country, held annually in various Brazilian cities. Since 2022, the city has another important jazz festival produced by Stênio Matos: with the support of SESC, one of the stages of a state jazz circuit is being held in Paraty.

¹⁸³ Interview with Lucineide Silva, Secretary of Tourism, given to the authors on July 19, 2018.

dogenous in the territory, somewhat diversifying the tourist-cultural initiatives and reaching a wider audience. This is the case with the *Estações Musicais* project (an initiative spearheaded by the Casa de Cultura and the City's Department of Culture), which traditionally takes up several months of the calendar. On that, Maffei comments:

We're trying to occupy various spaces in the city with music, not just the most obvious urban venues. Last year we used the city's Fort – and we'll continue to do so in the future this year too, because the idea is a festival in the opposite direction: instead of being concentrated in a few days, it's spread out all year round, it works in the counterflow of festivals, on weekends when there's no other event in the city. What's more, we propose musical performances using alternative spaces in the city, rather than setting up tents and a whole circus. We've used churches (which are marvellous), *Casa da Cultura*, and the Fort area, which has a precious landscape.¹⁸⁴

In fact, the goal to analyse Paraty in this chapter – to highlight the case study of music – is based on the assumption that it is precisely around the disputes and tensions surrounding music that it would be possible to open the city's "black box" (Latour, 2012) and better understand some of the "controversies" and interests in the territory.

Although there have been important advances in terms of political and cultural negotiations between the local population and government bodies, there is also a lot of resentment amongst the people of Paraty due to decades of exclusionary public policies that, in a sense, still persist.¹⁸⁵ In general, interviewees said that they felt

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Marcus Maffei, music coördinator at *Casa de Cultura de Paraty*, given to the authors on March 25, 2018.

¹⁸⁵ For example, there are perennial local problems: there are no universities in the region and research indicates growing urban violence, especially amongst young people.

as if they had no prospects, they perceived the tourism chain as a kind of “game of cards”, which always favours the city’s main businesspeople, thus “exhausting people throughout their lives” and not offering many opportunities for social advancement. In view of this adverse scenario, the City’s Department of Culture and SESC, which concentrate a large number of progressive leaders and technicians in the city¹⁸⁶, are trying to build new cultural venues to improve local quality of life (such as libraries, cinemas, and theatres) as well as a Vocational Training Centre (to train the local workforce); and they have created a Youth Coordination Office for the city (to mediate the demands of young people, making sure that these demands reach the main institutionalised fora in the city).

Even though the Department of Culture is open and trying to develop more inclusive public policies, unfortunately these same technicians don’t give due value either to the street parties – slams and hip hop – that take place on a regular basis or to the youth parties organised sporadically in hostels and alternative venues (such as warehouses and squares) as “assets” (Sousa Santos, 2006), which can contribute to the development of a youth scene in the region, capable of mobilising the diversity of audiences who attend the city’s cultural life. Unfortunately, they end up endorsing the bans of local Iphan technicians, who have severely restricted these activities, especially in prime areas of Paraty.¹⁸⁷ The technicians from the public institutions are basically afraid of degrading the city and thus losing the heritage capital if they free up public spaces for use by young people and/or other actors. At the same time, dissatisfaction is growing amongst

¹⁸⁶ According to reports from locals, SESC has regularly invested in the cultural diversity of the area, developing activities aimed at the poorest communities in the region.

¹⁸⁷ At the same time, during the big monthly festivals, Iphan turns a blind eye, allowing disorderly and predatory occupation during the days when these mega-events take place.

part of the local creative sector. In order to gauge this, for example, the teams of producers who organise the main music festivals – *Bourbon*, *Circuito SESC de Jazz*, and *Mimo* – are mostly brought in from elsewhere; in other words, almost no labour from the local cultural sector is included.¹⁸⁸

Despite these difficulties having been highlighted in the local context, Paraty stands out in the state of Rio de Janeiro as a city that has experienced significant levels of local development for almost two decades, to a large extent due to the musical and cultural activities (entertainment and tourism) developed in the area. If, on the one hand, there is a lack of elements for this city to be properly considered a “creative city” (even though UNESCO has already recognised it as such), not only is there a lack of dynamics for greater integration and association in the territory, but the tactics and cunning (De Certeau, 1995) adopted by the leaders so far are still, for the most part, ostentatious, colossal, exogenous, and spectacularising. On the other hand, the results achieved by this locality by adopting territorial marketing strategies have been reasonably successful: in other words, they have promoted more dynamism in the territory, even if they haven’t solved the socio-economic imbalances reported by actors and identified in certain areas of the city.

¹⁸⁸ Concerned about this, the city council has even tried to territorialise these large free events in the city in recent years, demanding that the festivals offer workshops and courses for the local population and, when possible, that the events absorb some technicians in the production team and local artists on alternative stages at the festivals.

4. The (en)chanting streets of Conservatória

*Conservatória, my love
When I leave, wherever I go
I shall remember your guitars, your stars, your moonlight [...].
And when someone visits you, I think you should say,
That I'm in love [...]
I may leave you one day
But I'll want to take you with me,
Your guitars, your seresta,
And your garden.
If I can't, I want to stay
And love your sky,
Kiss your ground, Conservatória,
Where I lost my heart [...]*
(excerpt from the *modinha* song entitled *Canção para Conservatória*,
by Guilherme de Brito)

What is striking about this case study is that an “imaginary” (Legros *et al.*, 2007) has been created of Conservatória as a “magical place”: for many – who invariably relate this story with affection and great emotion –, this small district of Valença, despite its many problems, is considered a kind of “getaway” from the lifestyle of the big metropolises, marked by the intensification of “nervous stimuli” (Simmel, 2013), speed, and functionality. This successful trajectory – as will be detailed here – was based on the regular experiences of weekly parades, circles, and live concerts, shared by “musical activists” with the village’s inhabitants for over 70 years, regularly attracting large groups of visitors to this area.

As Ribeiro (2010) points out, when you visit this place, you come into contact with a set of musical genres, especially under the rubric of “serenade”, in an environment and lifestyle that harks back to a “golden age of Brazilian romantic music”. In other words, there is a “nostalgic” ambience reigning in this territory and an intention on the part of the social actors to reconstruct or invest in this “past” (Huyssen, 2014), as implied in the name of the town itself (Conservatória means “Conservatory”). In other words, any visitor who arrives in Conservatória and spends the week in this village notices that its routine can be divided into two extremely distinct periods. From Monday through Thursday, it seems like any other village, as quiet as any other countryside town of Brazil, marked by their rural aspect and dynamics. However, from Friday through Sunday, that idyllic scenery regularly welcomes tourists and holidaymakers, giving rise to a surprising number of artistic and musical activities. On weekends, walking around the centre of Conservatória, you can see that music seems to be widespread and almost omnipresent: “[...] in the bars and inns, in the houses and in the streets. The atmosphere of the place is reflected in the names given to local establishments, such as *Restaurante Dó-ré-mi*, *Restaurante Recanto dos Artistas*, *Pousada Chão de Estrelas*, *Pousada Sol Maior*, *Padaria Lua Branca*, *Drogaria Melodia*, and *Ateliê Casa do Poeta*” (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 148). In fact, in view of the architecture of its colonial houses and the old farms in its surroundings, Conservatória has featured in national audiovisual productions: it has thus been used as a location for soap operas and period series such as *Dona Beija*, *Sinhá Moça*, *Paraíso* and *O Feijão e o Sonho*.

At the same time, Conservatória’s long cycle of success is not exactly related to the development of traditional capitalist strategies, but rather to local “musical activism”, especially the so-called “*Seresteiro* Movement” (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014). According to Ribeiro, the success of this movement is evident:

[...] the demand for humanised events evocative of affection and nostalgia to the detriment of leisure or entertainment globalised by the media [...]. At the same time, the calmness of the town and the cordiality of the people of Conservatória are also the object of estrangement and seduction [...] and actors are concerned with maintaining the celebratory character of the musical performances that gave rise to the atmosphere of the place, which calls itself the Brazilian Serenade and *Seresta* Capital (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 147).

On any visit to this district, it's common to spot free performances by musical groups or singers accompanied by a guitar in the streets or indoors. Of course, it is also possible to find not only musicians playing professionally in hotels, bars, and restaurants, but also artists who occasionally sell CDs or DVDs of their own work or interpretations of great hits from the past. However, musical activities in Conservatória are especially marked by non-market dynamics, at least within the *Seresteiro* Movement: as will be developed later in this chapter, for activists, music in Conservatória must be experienced to a large extent as an “amateur” practice, involving people who are engaged and enthusiastic about those musical environments (and not exactly mobilised by economic interests).

In that sense, this chapter is based on the assumption that the Conservatória district continues to have a competitive edge in the world of globalised entertainment through tourism that revolves around live music – or rather, that it now has a vector capable of leveraging local development. Thus, through the articulation of street music occupation initiatives (which build seductive “sonic-musical territorialities”) – offered free of charge to the public (linked to musical activism) and other more institutionalised initiatives (some of which even sell this type of activity) –, synergies and powerful collaborative

dynamics have been produced between the actors who have been building a kind of “creative district” in the region (Reis, 2012).

Analysing the locality’s trajectory retrospectively, it can be seen, on the one hand, that at first (for a long period of approximately 60 years), the *Seresteiro* Movement in particular guaranteed – almost exclusively – a significant competitive edge on the national tourism scene (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014); and, on the other hand, that more recently (especially in the last five years), there has been a process of diversification of musical activities in this territory, with *chorinho*, bossa nova, and samba also coming onto the scene, i.e. genres that have somewhat compensated for the “loss of breath” of the *Seresteiro* Movement. The uniqueness of the articulations around music in Conservatória has been the great differential that drives tourism and regularly attracts a floating population of around two thousand people who visit the town every weekend in search of a musical environment characterised by affection, memory, and engagement. During our fieldwork, it was possible to see that the occasional or ordinary visitor to the district continues to be encouraged to take part in parades, circles, and concerts: it continues to be a relevant practice for the power of this musical and touristic experience; in other words, it is one of the artifices in a set of significant “cunning and tactics” (De Certeau, 1994) that not only make it possible to sensitise new visitors/consumers (who are converted into enthusiasts of the different ambience and sound of the place), but also make it possible to incorporate new actors who are engaged and participate in the movement.

By consuming this “nostalgic and retro lifestyle” (Reynolds, 2011) – the epicentre of this experience (Pine & Gilmore, 2001) is “Brazilian” music, considered “*de raiz*”, authentic (Pereira, 2003), played mostly “alfresco” (in general, not commercialised), for visitors to this location (mostly senior citizens) –, these individuals move relevant local production chains involving various typical products

and services generally sold as tourist packages.¹⁸⁹ It is precisely this successful articulation between the “committed amateurism” and “purism” of the *Seresteiro* Movement and the commercial perspective of local commerce and tourism professionals that makes the Conservatória case study so interesting and unusual in the history of the country’s cultural economy (Prestes Filho *et al.*, 2002). In a sense, it’s possible to consider this case a kind of “laboratory” to rethink more democratic and endogenous public policies (Herschmann, 2007 and 2010). Thus, unlike the usual dynamics of public policies historically developed in Brazil – generally marked by discontinuity, authoritarianism, and institutional fragility (Rubim, 2007; De Marchi, 2018; Barbalho *et al.*, 2011; Calabre, 2008) –, those implemented in this village are characterised not only by uninterruptedness, but also and especially by longevity, certainly due to the trajectory of protagonism and associativism of the local actors in this territory.

4.1 The longevity of the seresta and serenade circuit in Vale do Café

Conservatória is a district of the municipality of Valença, located in the south of the state of Rio de Janeiro, in the Médio Paraíba region. It became known as a tourist centre in the last decades of

¹⁸⁹ According to a survey entitled “*Segunda Pesquisa de Opinião Musical e Turística de Conservatória*” (“Second Conservatória Music and Tourism Poll”), carried out at the beginning of the 21st century amongst consumers by the Secretary of State for Economic Development, the majority of people who visit Conservatória are Brazilians with an average age of 50, who have a higher-education degree, and an average monthly income of over R\$4,000. The report also states that these consumers choose the town for the following reasons: a) the location is pleasant (89%); b) you can listen to Brazilian music (82%); and c) the natural beauty of the region (81%). Despite highlighting the pleasant environment and its nature, the overwhelming majority (82%) report that the activity that they are most interested in doing during their visit to the area is watching a serenade (for more information, see Secretaria de Estado de Desenvolvimento Econômico, 2005).

the 20th century. Here, the practice of *seresta* – a musical style that fundamentally marked the first half of the 20th century in the country – was not only “preserved”, but especially stimulated through a peculiar cultural movement. The only reason this micro-region did not experience the crisis and economic decline that characterised the urban sites of the Paraíba Valley and the end of the Coffee Cycle was because, from the 1950s onwards (although the first recorded open-air processions date back to the mid-1930s), *serestas* and serenades began to be held more systematically in the region, which gradually attracted more audiences and gained more space. As has already been pointed out, that represented the creation of “externalities” (Cocco *et al.*, 2003; Moulrier-Boutang, 2007), allowing the village to stand out for the proliferation of economic activities linked to tourism and leisure.

In fact, these serenades and *serestas* initially emerged as spontaneous, non-commercial activities that began to make their mark, attracting a growing audience, to the point of instigating commercial initiatives (and also expanding non-commercial ones), which sustained the flow of people who were attracted to the place by the practice of this “set of songs”. In general, the *seresteiros* who have sung and played over the decades have done so out of affection and pleasure. They are the ones who have largely contributed to giving an “identity” to this set of artistic and tourist products and services, which is practically unique in Brazil¹⁹⁰ (Conservatória’s serenade,

¹⁹⁰ In Brazil, the experience that comes closest is that of the city of Diamantina, which, unlike Conservatória, is not marked by an “engaged” musical movement and has a slightly different dynamic. The city of Diamantina is also known as the “city of serenades” and has maintained a certain presence in the national media for having created the so-called “*Vesperata*”, a year-round event. Taking the case of Conservatória as a parameter, this is a kind of “inverted serenade”. Visitors buy seats on the main street, improvising an audience on tables in nearby bars, stairs, and pavements. Organised by local entrepreneurs, the audience watches the performance of symphonic bands whose musicians are professionally hired and positioned in the illuminated windows and balconies of the old manors. There,

which combines musical nostalgia with the simple landscape of the twin houses in the urban centre). This success has led to an increase not only in the commercial and service structure, but also in the number of regularised properties in the village (a significant proportion of which are inns and commercial establishments): data from the town hall shows that these increased by 60% between 2001 and 2010 alone.

In other words, the more recurrent presence of brothers José Borges Freitas and Joubert de Freitas in the village from the 1950s onwards is often considered by actors to be a founding milestone in the spontaneous and democratic construction of the *seresta* circuit in Conservatória.¹⁹¹ Others suggest that it was in the 1960s, when the *Seresta* and Serenade Museum was created – a traditional meeting point for the movement – that this musical style began to take on the shape it still has today. It was also in the 1960s that the serenade memory took over the streets of the village with the “*Projeto Conservatória, a song in every home*” (devised by the Freitas brothers), when most of the houses in the village centre began to install plaques alluding to the songs sung in serenades and *serestas*. With a population of approximately 4,000 inhabitants, the village generates an average of

these artists are conducted by a maestro on a small platform in the centre of the square, next to the audience (for more details, see Ribeiro, 2010).

¹⁹¹ Numerous references have been found to the importance of practising music before the movement was led by the Freitas brothers. Authors of material publicising Conservatória refer to performances of popular songs under the moonlight that date back to the 19th century. They claim that, in Conservatória, on moonlit nights, it was common for artists to gather in the main square to sing and play, whilst people watched from a distance. Violinist Andreas Schmidt, a regular visitor to the village, is considered to be the forerunner of the Conservatória Serenade. Marques (2009) points out that these festivities – both amongst farmers and slaves – elevated music to a symbolic category and formed the future identity of the inhabitants of Conservatória. The author not only records the occasional presence of “outsider” musicians hired for the festivities, but also emphasises that some ended up settling there. In between performances, these musicians taught music to locals and visitors.

R\$250 million a month from tourism; of which more than two thirds are generated by so-called musical activism, which is systematically carried out on weekends in the streets, in public institutions, in hotels, and on festive occasions in the village's calendar¹⁹², a large part of which is supported with funds from the *Associação Comercial Rural Industrial e Turística* (Acritur).

Of course, there are other aspects apart from music that make this village an attractive place, especially for an older audience. Actors mention the “proximity to an important metropolis in the country, such as Rio”, the “peacefulness of the place”, the “more intense presence of nature”, “the possibility of recovering a daily life not marked by the fear of violence and tensions that characterise large Brazilian cities”. Analysing the history of the district, we find that the first restaurants, inns, and farm stays were established in the 1970s, with many typical ecotourism activities being offered (forming the basis of the current tourism infrastructure). Today, in addition to the tourist attractions common in small towns (such as the parish church of Santo Antônio, the old railway station, and the coffee plantations that are now open to visitors) and two very dynamic concert halls (*Espaço Sonora* and *Instituto Waldir Azevedo*), this area has several collections from important Brazilian composers (with collections of photographs, posters,

¹⁹² In addition to the famous serenades and *serestas*, it is increasingly possible to find parades, circles, concerts, and parties involving other genres of “authentic music” – such as samba, *choro*, and bossa nova – that occupy private and public spaces in the village in the mornings and evenings on weekends. So, the weekly events that take place in the village are: the Serenades, the “*Solaratas*” (a neologism that refers to serenades held in daylight, but which promote other types of music), *Som na Pracinha* (dedicated to samba, bossa nova, and some old MPB songs), and *Choro na Praça* (held in the main square on Saturday mornings). plus, the main festivals generally scheduled in the village in recent years have been: *Aniversário e Encontro dos Seresteiros*, *Aniversário do Samba do Jorge*, tribute to the radio singers, *Aniversário e Noite do Chorinho*, *Carnaval Antigo*, and *Noite de Bossa Nova* (Available at: <<https://www.conservatoria.tur.br/calendario-de-eventos.html>>, accessed: June 10, 2022).

instruments, vinyl records, as well as the artists' personal objects such as clothes, accessories, trophies, furniture, etc.), the vast majority donated by the artists' families. The museums Vicente Celestino, Sílvia Caldas, Guilherme de Brito, Gilberto Alves, and Nelson Gonçalves were created by local actors (and with little support from Valença city government) (it should be noted that these spaces expanded the offer of cultural activities and entertainment in the region, especially in the mornings).

4.2 The local arrangement of entertainment production

Conservatória's success attracted the interest of technicians and consultants from the public authorities, who identified this location as a case in which the "cultural economy" (Prestes Filho *et al.*, 2002) was capable of leveraging local development. Technicians linked to the government began to assess what was happening in the micro-region from an "instrumental" perspective which, in general, identifies Conservatória as another successful experience of "associativism", similar to what has happened in other cities around the world and which is widely described in the literature analysing the trajectory of clusters, local productive arrangements, and industrial districts. Thus, in view of subsequent evaluations by consultants from various development institutions, Conservatória came to be considered, at the beginning of the 21st century, as Brazil's first Local Entertainment Production Arrangement (Câmara de Gestão dos Apls do Rio de Janeiro, 2007).

Based on this recognition, a set of governance strategies was created in 2006 with the aim of broadening and making the local productive network more efficient. Thus, a Local Coordination of the APL Project was set up (with the support of the Rio de Janeiro State

Secretary for Economic Development)¹⁹³, which was abandoned a few years later due to discontinuity in mandates in the Rio de Janeiro state government. Despite recognising the importance of this support from the state, which was based on “instrumental reason” – which is put into action under the rubric of the need for “governance”, “more efficient management”, and a “strategic action plan” –, it is assumed here that those involved in this project were unable to understand the reasons for Conservatória’s success and the challenges it is facing. As will be analysed below, it is based on the premise that in order to better understand this rare case study, it is necessary to take into account “sensitive rationality”¹⁹⁴, that is, the aesthetic and communicative facts that underpin mobilisation and sociability – marked by strong emotion – of both activists (or even sympathisers) and visitors in Conservatória’s daily life. A large part of Conservatória’s consumers and regular visitors seek out “experiences” there (Pine & Gilmore, 2001) that revolve around the *seresta* universe and, in general, “so-called authentic music”. Another fundamental factor that would explain the success achieved by the district is related to the sensory, spectacularising experience produced in the locality. Despite being on the periphery of the music industry and not being legitimised by

¹⁹³ During the APL project period, a number of actions were carried out with the aim of increasing local development in the region, such as: a) Music and Tourism Polls, commissioned by the State Secretary for Development; b) organisation of workshops; c) implementation of an power substation; d) expansion, unification, and diversification of the village’s cultural calendar; e) paving of the Contorno roads and the one linking this district to Valença; f) organisation of a technical workshop for structuring the Conservatória Entertainment APL; g) and the creation, in 2009, of the Conservatória Cultural, Historical, and Tourism Hub.

¹⁹⁴ This is a concept coined by Maffesoli in the 1990s, which proposes to problematise the traditional modern perspective that sees reason as dissociated from emotion; in other words, the author operates with a sociological understanding that actors, in general, incorporate sensitive, spontaneous, and affective experience into their daily decisions as an important parameter (Maffesoli, 1998).

their audience as a mainstream cultural market, the musical activities of this micro-region end up generating products and services typical of entertainment culture and global tourism. The particularity – or competitive edge – of Conservatória is to offer a significant audience an environment and a set of face-to-face experiences with high added value (Pine & Gilmore, 2001). In other words, the musical concerts identified with a more traditional symbolic universe, combined with the colonial architectural landscape of Centro Histórico, are a crucial ingredient capable of attracting significant segments of an elderly audience.

4.3 Facing local challenges and brokering local development

In general terms, it is possible to identify three sets of discourses and interests that evaluate not only the development achieved by the city, but also how this process should be conducted in the region today. They, of course, have points of both convergence and divergence, which has allowed relevant collaborative dynamics to develop in the region.

The first set of narratives identified was that of the owners of large farm stays on the outskirts of the village, who demand: a) especially more communication infrastructure and access to the region (road improvements, diversification of the public transport system, and more bandwidth for data/information transfer), b) more courses to train quality workforce dedicated to the tourism sector; c) an increase and diversification of the city's annual event calendar; d) and, of course, they are especially concerned about the decrease in the number of actors involved in these regular activities, i.e. the so-called “crisis of the *Seresteiro* Movement” (as a solution, these entrepreneurs propose the immediate professionalisation of the artists or, as an alternative,

the implementation of a mixed dynamic that brings together amateur and professional musicians) because the appreciation of these musical processions is part of their tour packages (they are part of the attractions on offer to visitors). Sérgio Constantino (owner of the Rochedo farm stay), one of the main local leaders, expresses his concern about the weakening of the *Seresteiro* Movement:

With the recurrent economic crises, we generally have to chase tourists [...] and the city's seductive power, its ability to attract the public, is diminishing [...] and the main cause of this is the current weakening or certain emptying of the *seresta* and serenade movement [...]. The *seresteiros* don't want to talk about it too much, but a few years ago, even inside any restaurant, you could hear the music because there were 15 or 17 guitars and 500 tourists following the procession [...]. Today you go to a procession and find three or four guitars and the audience has been halved [...]. Unfortunately, it's no longer the same movement as in the past, with the same ability to mobilise.¹⁹⁵

The second set of narratives and interests that we identified in our research is that of the members of the *Seresteiro* Movement. This group, which has been active in the locality for decades, believes that what sets Conservatória apart is that the village has a *seresta* movement. They follow the teachings established by the Freitas brothers – back in the 1970s and 1980s, considered by the vast majority of residents to be the “golden age” of the *seresta* and serenade in the town.¹⁹⁶ These activists say that since that time they have not

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Sérgio Constantino, owner of the Rochedo farm stay, given to the authors on February 1st, 2011.

¹⁹⁶ In 2009, following the death of Joubert Freitas, the *Seresteiro* Museum was closed by his widow, and the movement was transferred to Casa de Cultura. For many, this “golden age” is coming to an end: the *seresteiros* interviewed often list the successive deaths of

only sought to keep out of local political disputes, but also repudiate the commercial nature of music associated with the movement. The testimonies of the main leaders show that they are not very tolerant of the presence of professionals in the region, and in no way consider the commercialisation of local musicians:

Most tourists complain a lot [...] it's even funny [...] if, by chance, it rains on a weekend or something happens that prevents the serenade from taking place [...]. Many of them come to us, demanding that the event be held as if we were employees of the hotels or even the city government [...]. The movement is aware of its important role in the economic development of the region, but it doesn't want to be linked to the interests of economic or political groups.¹⁹⁷

For most of them, if music were to become professionalised in Conservatória, the village would lose its uniqueness and thus its ability to attract tourists and visitors:

If serenades were professionalised here, Conservatória would probably be on a par with so many other cities around the country, where people are paid to perform and mobilise tourism and trade in the region [...]. In other words, this movement would end, and most of the tourists would certainly stop visiting the town [...]. It's a spontaneous and magical movement

important leaders (the average age of the actors involved is very high), the emergence of dissident groups who abandoned the movement, and conflicts motivated especially by personal vanity, as significant aspects that have contributed to the significant reduction in musical activists taking part in initiatives in the city in recent years.

¹⁹⁷ Interview with Marina Fonseca, one of the leaders of the Seresteiro Movement, given to the authors on May 25, 2019.

[...] The fact is that people feel committed to being here every weekend.¹⁹⁸

The members of the *Seresteiro* Movement are not exactly against the expansion and diversification of local musical and cultural events, as long as the traditional prominence given to *seresta* in regional culture is reasonably maintained, especially within the village's annual calendar. During the fieldwork, we could see that certain doubts remained about the movement's "ability to renovate itself".¹⁹⁹ On the one hand, actors think it is important to get the local cultural life moving, but, on the other, they fear that diversifying these activities and the village's official calendar will change its identity. They fear that these initiatives could "de-characterise" the region culturally and alienate a loyal public that has been visiting the village for decades.

It seems that the local actors feel divided, but they think it's important to continue stimulating a rich and effervescent environment, even as a way of recovering the *Seresteiro* Movement. They consider it important to maintain the large flow of tourists in some way, as they believe that the potential "recruitment" of these visitors remains the most effective way of renewing or reviving the movement in the near future:

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Jorge Fonseca, one of the leaders of the *Seresteiro* Movement, given to the authors on January 31, 2011.

¹⁹⁹ Some actors are more pessimistic about the current context of dwindling numbers of activists and guitarists involved. Edgar Vilela, one of the leaders of the *Seresteiro* Movement, even calls into question the group's capacity for renovation: "[...] everything indicates that the movement's days are numbered, at least in the loving and disinterested way it's been done for many decades [...]. Unfortunately, in recent years we've been holding serenades and *serestas* with a very small number of people. The truth is that some of the activists have left the movement or are involved in other musical activities around here. At the same time, many important leaders, who were very charismatic, have passed away, are very ill, or in no condition to take part in these activities" (interview with Edgar Vilela, one of the leaders of the *Seresteiro* Movement, granted to the authors on May 24, 2019).

We're concerned and of course we've been trying to get involved, doing important work to renovate the *Seresteiro* Movement, attracting tourists interested in joining and participating [...]. We realise expanding events in the city is an attempt to breathe new life into the region by attracting more visitors [...]. We believe this could be a valid course of action, as long as serenade and *seresta* continue to be prioritised in the initiatives implemented in Conservatória.²⁰⁰

And finally, there is a third set of discourses that postulate that what sets Conservatória apart is that it has several more or less spontaneous musical movements, a commitment by amateurs who are passionate about Brazilian music, but not exclusively associated with *seresta* and serenades. This group obviously does not want to see musical activities professionalised either, identifying amateur activism as a fundamental vector for the regular mobilisation of visitors. For example, the concern of the innkeepers (and of the bars, restaurants, museums, and concert halls) is that there should be a volume and circulation of visitors inside the village throughout the day, which is why it is very important to diversify the tourist attractions (a situation quite different from that experienced by the owners of farm stays, who carry out practically all the range of activities inside their properties). In this sense, Deolinda Saraiva (owner of Pousada Das Amoras), one of the village's leaders, is in favour of expanding events and creating other complementary movements to the consolidated *seresta* and serenade, such as *choro*, bossa nova, MPB, samba, amongst others.

What sets Conservatória apart is that the village is a kind of capital of live Brazilian music, sung in the streets, by people

²⁰⁰Interview with Ailton Rodrigues, one of the leaders of the *Seresteiro* Movement, given to the research on 31 January 2011.

who are passionate about music, but not necessarily involving professional artists. But, of course, there are many people here who cling excessively to what is only conservative and don't open their minds to new trends, to the new musical movements that are emerging in the region. These same people only worry about whether the *Seresteiro* Movement will end, but in my opinion, it will never end [...]. There's a lot of vanity and there are conflicts and quarrels, but this movement has always been very strong here. In fact, *seresta* was responsible for paving the way, showing that this village can live off music, develop through music. Today there is the possibility and the need to open up the range of music: many people in the village have realised this [...]. Of course, serenades and serestas are Conservatória's greatest icons. I consider serenades and serenades to be our Christ the Redeemer, which is why they should be preserved and promoted. But at the same time, we need to realise that the village is much more than that too.²⁰¹

As mentioned before, despite the tensions between the various groups and interests present in the territory, there are important associative dynamics that have been guaranteeing, in a way, not only a robust tourist calendar and flow in this district, but also quality of life indicators that stand out nationally, even in the context of the economic crisis or recession. So, despite the fact that Valença's city government does not give much priority to this district in its public policy initiatives (which in the past has already culminated in an attempt by the locality to seek independence as a city), actors have been overcoming some of the complex challenges – which have been posed to the territory's development – through collaborative practices that currently revolve around Acritur. This association, set up in 2015

²⁰¹ Interview with Deolinda Saraiva, owner of Pousada das D'Amoras, given to the authors on January 30, 2011.

as an organisation that promotes local associations, has managed to raise funds with traders, innkeepers, and farm-stay owners to be reinvested in the area, especially in the entertainment and tourism sector. Mauro Contrucci, the association's president at the time, made the following comments:

At the moment, almost 65% of the inns take part, 100% of the hotels too, 100% of the restaurants and bars are with us, and as for the shops, we have a membership of around 70%. We're thinking of running a new campaign to increase membership, but in any case we already have 209 members. Our events and programmes are all geared towards local traditions, especially the *Seresteiro* Movement, which is very important to Conservatória's history. We also organise events dedicated to *Cantores do Rádio*; evenings dedicated to bossa nova and samba as well as tributes to *chorinho* or vintage Carnival parties. We organise a calendar of events that's updated and built collectively every year. We call on the village's leaders and artists to organise it by the end of November of the previous year. These strategic meetings are usually attended by, for example, Edgar Vilela (representing the *seresteiros*), Juarez de Brito (representing *chorinho*), Roberto Velasque (for bossa nova), amongst other important members of our community. At these meetings, we decide how much the association will support each event that year. Our budget has serious limitations, but we try to cater to everyone, all the diversity of initiatives. The idea is to fill up the whole year with activities, guaranteeing – as far as possible – a good flow of tourists to Conservatória. Of course, there are some events that Acritur is able to fund 100% and others that the organisers have to chase part of the funds to make them viable, but it's all very much discussed, in a collaborative way.²⁰²

²⁰² Interview with Mauro Contrucci, President of Acritur, given to the authors on May 25, 2019.

Acritur's presence is so important to the locality that many of the actors interviewed confuse the role of the association with that of the Valença city government (which, unfortunately, is not very present and active in this district). In this sense, Contrucci emphasises that:

Acritur's board has had many problems with this. The town hall sometimes collaborates with Conservatória and is a partner, but sometimes it doesn't, for various reasons: either a lack of resources or even for political reasons. We manage to solve a lot of things. However, this ends up causing a lot of confusion and residents often ask us if the rubbish lorry hasn't come by or if there's a shortage of water somewhere, regardless of whether or not this is related to a tourist activity.²⁰³

4.4 Serenade and seresta capital

The actors interviewed, despite underlining some reservations, frequently recognise the benefits produced by some of the APLs governance project initiatives (which led to improved road access and the creation of a unified event calendar and power substation). They even seem to incorporate the technocratic/instrumental logic when they mention that some initiatives could be easily implemented, improving the integration and development of the region, such as: a) a tourist centre (with staff specialised in assisting visitors and providing information materials, such as leaflets and historical and tourist maps of the village and its surroundings); b) the creation of a set of services responsible for taking tourists on visits to the various attractions in the region; c) the implementation of more routes and regular coaches linking the city of Rio de Janeiro directly to Conservatória; d) closing

²⁰³ *Idem.*

down through-traffic in Centro Histórico; e) the installation of underground power and telephone lines in Centro Histórico; and f) the expansion of means of communication and banking and postal services in the area. The APL project is viewed with some suspicion by many social actors (Bessa, 2011). Several small business owners, *seresteiros*, and members of civil society fear that the projects underway will cater more to the interests and needs of the big local businesspeople (generally identified as the owners of the farm stays).

Analysing the history of this village, we see that some significant changes are taking place in Conservatória: on the one hand, even with the “movements’ crisis”, the village continues to be considered the “serenda and *seresta* capital”; but, on the other, it is possible to see that actors have been seeking alternatives for sustainability, which aim to cater to different interests in the region. Thus, there is now a clear diversification of musical activities beyond the traditional *seresteiros* circuit.²⁰⁴ Not only are there countless “music activists”, but there are also entrepreneurs and cultural producers who have been organising serenades with paid artists in farm stays, concert halls, or even bars in the city.

Amongst visitors, we often find positive comments that indicate how these changes are having an impact on the visiting public:

²⁰⁴ Even on the main local radio stations, this diversity is increasingly expressive and is becoming legitimised, even among the more conservative audiences, who often demand more traditional music and themes. In this respect, Roberto Velasque, who runs Rádio Sarau, comments that “sometimes some listeners object to our programme, saying that we’re playing too much samba or bossa nova instead of *serestas* [...] I reply that *seresta* is our flagship and always will be, but that there are other cultural movements that take place here, which also add to and are important assets of the region. In addition, chorinho, samba, MPB and bossa nova are part of the rich and traditional repertoire of Brazilian music, which is respected all over the world” (interview with Roberto Velasque, director of Rádio Sarau, given to the research on 25 May 2019).

Whenever we have some time off, we rush here. We love this place, we love taking part in *chorinho*, *seresta*, the serenades and, in general, all the music circles. Today we were at the theatre, because it was *Espaço Sonora's* anniversary, and we went to see the performances [...] it was beautiful. Tomorrow there will be the Carmen Miranda block, which always throws an incredible party. *Serestas* are always marvellous and different. I love singing old songs that my family used to sing at home. I've also seen bossa nova and choir performances here, it's always great. This village is marvellous, we breathe music here, old and nostalgic music is everywhere. It doesn't have the stress of big cities either. The pace in Conservatória is in tune with life in days gone by. Elders are not always able to take advantage of what a place has to offer. It's different here: everything seems to have been designed for a more elderly audience.²⁰⁵

Actors in the village of Conservatória (even in adverse national contexts) have managed to face the local challenges analysed, especially through the diversification of musical activism that has occupied the public and private spaces of this locality. These activist practices continue to build relevant “sonic-musical territorialities” – in other words, experiences that are engaging and valued by both actors of the movements and visitors, which for most almost become powerful “heterotopias” (Lefebvre, 2004). However, they also continue to build highly successful collaborative dynamics (and an associative culture) that are now established here, involving shopkeepers, artists, cultural producers, as well as inn and hotel owners.

²⁰⁵ Interview with Nathalia Santos, a regular at Conservatória's serenades, given to the authors on May 26, 2019.

5. Rio das Ostras: between major festivals, attempts at Unesco designation, and other territorial branding strategies

Âncora and Marilea
Recreio and Costa Azul
Centro and Nova Cidade
In Gelson or in Bangu
Hi, I haven't forgotten the island
nor Goiamum
Peroba and Operário
I sing and I'm not enchanted
By the birds at the beach [...]
(excerpt from the rap song *Se joga em Rio das Ostras*,
by MC Joga 7)

This chapter seeks to continue the cartography (Latour, 2012) and reflections that have been developed on the recent history of the Rio das Ostras seaside town in Rio de Janeiro since 2016²⁰⁶, especially rethinking the role of music in promoting “local development”²⁰⁷ for this territory. Or rather, to evaluate the consequences of the link between the communication network, investment in music as a relevant factor in social mobilisation (which increases tourism and local sociocultural dynamism), and the public policies that have

²⁰⁶ The first partial results of this research are recorded in the article entitled “*Rio das Ostras, cidade do jazz*” (Herschmann *et al.*, 2017).

²⁰⁷ The actual contemporary debate on development today does not involve a developmentalist perspective but, rather, discussions associated with local development, as well as those relating to the necessary articulation between the various actors involved in the development process (for more details, see Buarque, 2008).

recently been implemented in the everyday of the city. It is based on the assumption that music can be a fundamental vector for the construction of significant territorialities, especially in the state of Rio de Janeiro, as has been pointed out in works published in recent years (Herschmann & Fernandes, 2014).

In the most recent research carried out in this seaside town, it was possible to attest to important processes of continuity and discontinuity involving actors in their associations: the relevance of the controversies in the local “music scenes”²⁰⁸ is emphasised; that is, notably the initiatives involving live music have been collaborating significantly to convert Rio das Ostras into a locality with better levels of inclusion and social participation.

The resumption of this study in the locality has become especially relevant in view of the city’s application in 2019 for the UNESCO Creative City designation (in the music category). Despite the rejection of this application, many of the players are still wondering what formats, social practices, and musical experiences would legitimise the granting of this title to the city. The hypothesis that guides the arguments developed in this chapter is that Rio das Ostras lacked an associative culture and a more plural and democratic environment. The city’s application process for this Unesco designation shows this. Unfortunately, this application was not fully taken advantage of as a significant opportunity to further integrate this territory: it could have been a relevant opportunity for actors to jointly rethink alternatives for

²⁰⁸ The term was coined in 1991 by Canadian communications theorist Will Straw at a conference entitled “*The music industry in a changing world*” and is widely used in Sound and Music Studies in Brazil. The concept generally refers to alliances and coalitions actively created and maintained by actors, through which forms of communication are articulated that contribute to delineating territorialities and sociocultural boundaries. It is often confused with the diffuse use made of it by actors and cultural journalism. On the importance of this concept for the field of Communications, see Janotti Jr. & Sá (2013).

effectively building a “creative city”, directly and indirectly leveraging music and “culture as a resource”.²⁰⁹ The choice made by the local leaders and public authorities was to put this initiative aside for the time being, without much debate or dialogue with the city’s councils and fora. When asked about the Unesco recognition process, Secretary of Tourism Aurora Siqueira said: “[...] we always try to do the best for the city [...], but we can’t pretend to be what we’re not yet”.²¹⁰

5.1 Resignifying the city through music

There is an effort here to present issues linked not only to institutionalised musical practices (led in Rio das Ostras by the mega-event, which is the annual Jazz & Blues Festival), but also to consider spontaneous musical initiatives – which are more temporary and less visible – that sometimes participate in a “cunning and/or tactical” way in the processes of (re)constructing the imagery and rhythms of everyday life in Rio das Ostras. In particular, we sought to analyse the links and tensions between actors, especially at a time when the public administration is trying to value music as a vector for socio-economic development, betting on the link between this artistic activity and the tourism, gastronomy and, in general, entertainment chains. So, in order to build sensitive cartographies of this city, we followed the dynamics of the regrouping of the actors, traced the controversies present in this territory and tried to open the black boxes in order to better understand the potential and challenges faced in this locality.

²⁰⁹ Yúdice points out that today, in a world with neoliberal tendencies, there is a great expectation on the part of actors that the field of culture will not only be able to manage the political tensions found in the contemporary (multicultural) world, but that it will also be a vector capable of leveraging the development of localities due to its capacity to increase tourism and territorial marketing (Yúdice, 2005).

²¹⁰ Interview with Aurora Siqueira, Secretary of Tourism and Economic Development, given to the authors on March 11, 2022.

From a perspective limited to statistical data and the economic motivation behind the founding of the city, Rio das Ostras is sometimes considered a “dormitory town” that would only fulfil the function of welcoming oil sector labour for a time, subject to market fluctuations, without its residents actually building links or productive practices in the city.²¹¹ The transience of the population is also seen as having been increased by the arrival of the Fluminense Federal University in 2003 in the locality.²¹² The presence of a transient population, however, must be assessed not only from statistical parameters, but must also take into account the relevant cultural exchanges that take place in the meeting of different population flows such as native Caiçaras, oil-sector workers and tourism professionals, university students, amongst others. In that regard, Carlos Henrique Pimentel, advisor to *Rio de das Ostras Foundation for Culture*, made the following comment:

It’s wrong to think of Rio das Ostras as a “dormitory town” [...]. In reality, it’s a “city in transit”, where various trajectories, cultures, and memories come together. There is an expressive cultural diversity here, and it’s precisely that which constitutes the city’s richness. We need to start taking this on board as a positive aspect, as a local brand.²¹³

²¹¹ Rio das Ostras is a small town in the state of Rio de Janeiro, emancipated from Casimiro de Abreu in 1992. Its population is estimated at 150,000 and it stands out for having the highest population growth rate in the state (an average of 11% per year until 2010). The exponential population growth is mainly attributed to oil exploration in the Campos Basin. The boom in the oil market in the 1980s attracted direct and indirect workers from the sector to live in this region.

²¹² This seaside resort receives students in transit from all over Brazil who move to Rio das Ostras. Most of them move back to their cities of origin throughout their (post) graduation years, returning at the end of their degrees.

²¹³ Interview with Carlos Pimentel, FROC advisor, given to the authors on August 15, 2019.

Despite being a young city, Rio das Ostras has important cultural facilities, such as *Centro de Formação Artística* (known as ONDA); *Teatro Popular*; a Museum dedicated to Sambaqui culture; the City Library; *Casa de Cultura*; *Fundição de Artes e Ofícios*; and the Acoustic Shell (used for various types of cultural performances). It is therefore a city that can be considered reasonably well-served by public cultural venues, especially when compared to neighbouring ones of the same size in the Lakes Region.

Specifically in the musical field, we can highlight: a) local institutionalised actions, such as the choir and music courses offered by ONDA and by artists who form the city orchestra;²¹⁴ b) musical tourism initiatives such as *SESC Verão*²¹⁵, *Festival de Covers*²¹⁶ and, more prominently, the Jazz & Blues Festival²¹⁷; c) the weekly concerts (held regularly on Thursdays) of the “*Soul da Casa*” project (organised at the *Teatro Popular* and dedicated to musicians from the city and from a variety of musical genres); d) independent initiatives, such as the traditional *OstrasCycle*²¹⁸ (which also takes place once a year);

²¹⁴ These initiatives are run by *Rio de das Ostras Foundation for Culture* (FROC) and aim to professionalise local musicians, as well as serving students from the city’s public schools.

²¹⁵ The Summer Festival attracts around 5,000 people every day to concerts by singers and popular bands from a variety of musical genres. The festival takes place during the high season and is financed through public-private partnerships.

²¹⁶ *Festival de Covers* had its first edition in 2019 and saw entries from musical groups from all over the country. The plan for 2020 is for the festival to expand in size and even be recognised as the most important in the country.

²¹⁷ The Jazz & Blues Festival is also funded through public-private partnerships and is considered to be the city’s most prominent institutional musical initiative, not only because of its continuity (the festival has been held regularly since 2003), but also because it is the largest music project (i.e. the one that mobilises the most manpower and resources from the city government). Information mentioned in an interview with Aurora Siqueira, Rio das Ostra’s Secretary of Tourism and Economic Development on December 5, 2019.

²¹⁸ *OstrasCycle* is an annual gathering of bikers, with motorbike shows, a food fair, and some live concerts. The event has been held for decades and helps to boost tourism in the city’s low season.

e) the performances regularly offered by independent bands at the *Taberna da Amendoeira* and *Confraria do Jamelão* venues; f) the powerful local trap and Rio funk scene, which has little visibility on the city's official channels, but which regularly promotes balls, festivals, and parties, taking place mainly in the city centre and in poor areas (mentioned in MC Joga 7's rap, in the epigraph to this chapter 5)²¹⁹; g) and, finally, the cultural practices that occupy public spaces, such as hip-hop circles and slams, which take place with some regularity in Praça dos Três Morrinhos.

From the fieldwork carried out, it was possible to identify that there are countless controversies involving local actors about how best to use “music as a resource” (Yúdice, 2005), and this fact is even expressed in the different actions of the public authorities. According to Aurora Siqueira, the city's Secretary of Tourism and Economic Development, music is a central part of the local tourism project for the coming years by the current administration. For this local authority, music should increasingly play a key role in socio-economic development through tourism. In her view, “[...] music as an entertainment activity would be capable of attracting high-income tourists even off-season, and should therefore be organised in a more eclectic and family-friendly programme”.²²⁰

Despite the tendency for music to be valued today, several interviewees emphasised in informal conversations (during the field) that there is little space for “independent and authorial sound” in the city,

²¹⁹ The *Midas Music Beer* venue (located in the city centre), for example, has a regular programme dedicated to this music scene: it has been promoting balls and festivals that are very popular in the region (for more details, see: <<https://www.facebook.com/midasmusicbeer>>, accessed : December 12, 2022).

²²⁰ Interview with Aurora Siqueira, Secretary of Tourism and Economic Development, given to the authors on December 5, 2019.

which often ends up forcing these musicians to leave the region and/or lead them to seek other professional occupations.

What is more, young local artists – many of whom come from the Cultural Production programme at the Fluminense Federal University – often question not only the lack of space for participation in the city’s cultural projects, but also the constant discontinuity of the events produced in the area.

Over the last two decades, the city has invested more in culture, but almost always in initiatives targeted at the tourism sector [...]. The point is that cultural expressions are unpredictable and often generate questions and social critique that are difficult to manage locally [...]. Many government leaders were surprised by the questions that arose at many events held in the city [...], and the University also contributed to this by training professionals and some critical mass in the city. And this ended up jeopardising the city government’s relationship with the University in 2014, because of the *Xerec Satanik* performance [...]. All of that generated a lot of negative repercussions in national media and the conservative segments of the city were very much suspicious of the people in the cultural area [...]. There’s no doubt that culture and square ideas don’t really go together [...], and this has led to a lot of discontinuity in initiatives involving local artists. Unfortunately, many projects of interest to these artists and the population were abandoned because they wouldn’t produce an immediate return for the city, as they didn’t really serve tourism interests [...], in other words, they didn’t have as much impact as the option to invest in festivals and major events that attract visitors to the city [...]. Of course, one line of action doesn’t exclude the other: I think it would be possible to include most of these small and large-scale initiatives [...]. Of course, many festivals are important and try to give opportunities to some local artists, as is the case with the jazz and blues festival [...]. More recently, I realise that,

fortunately, there have been some positive changes, though occasional. The current management of the Department of Culture has been incorporating University-trained workforce as technicians more systematically. The department has been more supportive of local initiatives and has developed several relevant projects aimed at the local scene, such as “*Soul da Casa*”. These initiatives have found a lot of engagement and resonance with the local population [...]. Despite that, the challenges facing artists here are still enormous. Even though we know that the region’s oil reserves won’t last forever and that the cultural sector can be an alternative source of local wealth, there’s still a lot of mistrust in the city towards what is proposed by artists from the region.²²¹

Taking into account the voices of the actors briefly mentioned here, it is possible to see that, since 2019, Rio das Ostras has been trying to build a development project for the city in a more or less endogenous way – whether through a more private or public route (in which some impasses, challenges, and contradictions are evident), even though, at times, in practice they have been reproducing territorial branding strategies adopted in other, more touristy cities in the country (Reis, 2012). About that, Stênio Matos, organiser of the city’s major Jazz & Blues Festival, made the following comment:

The festival was a great milestone, an incredible turning point for the city, which has always had a hard time standing out in the Lakes Region as a city capable of attracting tourists [...]. Music really helped change Rio das Ostras for the better [...]. Despite great adversity, I’ve always had the support of the city government [...] and it’s been many years of continuity, bring-

²²¹ Interview with Marcos Matarazzo, a local musician, given to the authors on June 18, 2022.

ing very tangible socio-economic results to the city of Rio das Ostras. We've worked hard and seriously, organising the biggest festival in Latin America and always featuring very important artists here [...] and, of course, helping to discover some new talents on the local and national scene.²²²

5.2 The relevance and limitations of the Jazz and Blues Festival

This festival began to be held in Rio das Ostras in 2003²²³, quickly gaining great visibility on the national scene. The event is free and open, featuring local, national, and international headliners, providing entertainment for approximately seven days of musical attractions within the genre, distributed on stages throughout the city: Costa Azul Beach, Tartaruga Beach, Iriri Lagoon, and the Acoustic Shell. Since the first edition, the duration of the event, as well as the distribution of the concerts on the stages, has undergone some changes, aimed at adjusting to structural, financial, and even climatic difficulties.

It is undeniable that the Jazz & Blues Festival has established itself as an attractive initiative that is very important for the city of Rio das Ostras in terms of its socio-economic impact, especially for the tourism sector. According to the data collected, the event has significantly generated income and employment for the population, as well as increasing economic activity in the city for over a decade. In 2019 and 2020, the Department of Tourism and Economic Development reported that the city injected a lot of resources into the

²²² Interview with Stênio Matos, producer and organiser of the Jazz & Blues Festival, given to the authors on March 7, 2022.

²²³ For more details on the festival's trajectory, see Herschmann *et. al.* (2017).

event, for which the economic return was estimated at ten times what was invested.

This festival not only promotes positive externalities for economic activities, but also generates benefits in the city's everyday, such as the emergence of music workshops, opportunities for formal and informal trade, academic incentives, and the revitalisation of urban environments and facilities. It is also interesting to note that the local public is systematically incorporated into the event: according to data from the Department of Tourism, Rio de Janeiro residents have attended more than 70% of the main attractions over the last two decades.

In a previous study, it was asked whether the positive externalities identified in the city were really promoted by the Jazz & Blues Festival. Many actors rightly pointed out that the HDI achieved in the city is largely the result of oil royalties (from the Campos Basin), without which it would be impossible to make public investments in the area (including encouraging the cultural activities that take place there). This consideration is not only necessary, but essential, given that, until 2018, a large part of the sponsorship granted to the Jazz & Blues Festival came from the numerous oil companies operating in the region. Taking into account the unwillingness of local businesses to support this festival, the viability of this mega-event was for many years achieved with resources and support from the oil sector.

I believe that these events should be financed by the city [...]. Not to mention that, with these recurrent crises, nobody has the legitimacy to ask for help from hotels, inns, or small local businesses, which are facing great hardships [...].²²⁴

²²⁴ Interview with Janaína Gomes, owner of Pousada do Bosque, given to the authors on December 23, 2016.

In 2019, we realised that the hardships led the organisers to try to diversify the range of sponsors of this mega-event, leading to the consolidation of a partnership with the local SESC. According to data provided by the Department of Tourism and Development, this institution was the main sponsor of the Jazz & Blues Festival and is still the main partner of the Summer Festival (renamed *SESC Verão* in 2019).

We have to realise that the companies that encourage culture here are linked to oil and gas, and so we have lost important resources in recent years because of the oil crisis. In 2019, we were lucky to have SESC, which embraced our annual entertainment programme. The resources from oil royalties, which have dwindled and are available, have been used for important basic funding: education, sanitation, and healthcare. So we've been looking for alternatives with other partners.²²⁵

In fact, about this important partnership with SESC, Stênio Matos makes the following observations:

This synergy has been very important for the resumption of activities in this current context, after the weakening of the Covid-19 pandemic [...]. We managed to establish a partnership with SESC, and the Rio das Ostras festival was included as one of the stages of a state jazz circuit that will be very important for reviving cultural life, not only in Rio das Ostras, but especially in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The trend is for us to have a powerful jazz circuit in the coming years, catering to tourism and the cultural life of countless cities in the state.²²⁶

²²⁵ Interview with Aurora Siqueira, Secretary of Tourism and Economic Development, given to the authors on December 5, 2019.

²²⁶ Interview with Stênio Matos, producer and organiser of the Jazz & Blues Festival, given to the authors on March 7, 2022.

Many of the actors interviewed expressed their discomfort with the city's dependence on oil royalties; that is, they have shown their dissatisfaction with market fluctuations and how much this affects creative activities in the region.

We would like to be discussing how to boost tourism and our creative economy. In our opinion, unfortunately the city is still very dependent on oil royalties, which are very scarce resources that can run out naturally. We believe that the creative economy can offer alternatives for the city. Perhaps that way we can build a more sustainable and lasting future.²²⁷

Still on the challenges and controversies related to the Jazz & Blues Festival, it is essential to emphasise the criticism not only of the low participation of local musicians and artists, but also of the low incorporation of former students trained in cultural production at this event. With regard to the lack of involvement from local musicians, some relevant comments can be made. One of the festival's "alternative stages" is *Casa do Jazz*, which is run by *Fundação de Cultura* (promoting spaces for independent artists to perform). On the *Casa do Jazz* stage, there are some booths promoting the work of local artists, such as the drawings of *Coletivo Barteliê* and the records of the traditional *Clube do Vinil*, well known in the seaside resort.

Could we ask ourselves how the Jazz & Blues Festival actually positively affects the lives of musicians in Rio das Ostras? Casa do Jazz, which is a nice proposal, is unfortunately very shy; it does little to help local artists. Unfortunately, the city's leaders don't think about musicians when they organise events [...]. I've played at the festival many times, it's an important stage,

²²⁷ Interview with Carlos Pimentel, FROC advisor, granted to the research on 15 August 2019.

but that alone isn't enough to guarantee and foster the local music scene [...].²²⁸

In various reports and participant observations of some festivals, it was possible to identify some of the issues faced by the actors who make up the local cultural scenes.

There's an obvious lack of care for professionals in the local music scene. You can see the difference between playing on one stage and playing on others. Unfortunately, in a place like *Casa do Jazz*, things don't happen as they do on the main stages, in a professional manner [...]. If you want to show your work at this festival, unfortunately you already know that the few who play there do so for free.²²⁹

From what has been found so far, the Rio das Ostras case study indicates that the festival – as a strategy to trigger broad processes that can leverage socio-economic development in a more capillary manner – is still a one-off initiative that only involves local actors to a limited extent. Thus, there is a risk that it will be perpetuated as a relevant city marketing strategy, which undeniably generates some positive results, but which, in general, has so far provided only limited direct and indirect benefits to the population of the area.

At the same time, some leaders and technicians see alternatives on the horizon for the local scene with the “expansion of the festival's structure and timing”.

This festival is great for the city, but we'd like to be able to count on other events that are more continuous and not so

²²⁸ Interview with Diogo Spadaro, local musician, given to the authors on December 30, 2019.

²²⁹ Interview with Cau Barros, local musician, given to the authors on December 30, 2019.

seasonal. In other words, it would be important to have quality events that take place over more days of the year, catering to artists and the region [...].²³⁰

5.3 Applications for UNESCO designation

Rio das Ostras' application for the Unesco Creative City designation was led by *Rio de das Ostras Foundation for Culture* (FROC) in conjunction with the city government. In this sense, the current administration has made efforts to align the city's cultural policies with the National Culture System, in order to implement mechanisms that enable citizen participation. In 2017, FROC created the City Culture Plan with goals and guidelines for each sector, as well as electing a culture council made up of government officials and nine civil society representatives.²³¹ For city government technicians, the format of this foundation provides the same agility in establishing new legal frameworks for the area of culture.²³²

²³⁰ Interview with Renata Cabral, FROC advisor, given to the authors on August 15, 2019.

²³¹ The City Culture Plan, as well as minutes and other documents relating to the City Culture Council are available at: <<http://conselhodeculturariodosostras.blogspot.com>>. Accessed: January 4, 2020.

²³² It's important to highlight certain particularities about this foundation. FROC was founded in 1997, when the city opted not to have a City Department of Culture in management, but rather a foundation. The foundation structure has some particularities, including an independent budget unit. FROC does not have a frozen budget percentage, as is the case with the city's Health and Education departments, which is one of the sector's main demands. As a result, it has an independent budget unit, which allows it to act in a more agile way and raise external funds (beyond the city budget itself). According to Cristiane Regis, FROC's president, "[...] there are several benefits to this model: a) agility in bidding, contracting, and project formulation; b) budgetary flexibility by speeding up public-private partnerships and by conceiving the foundation also as a service provider; c) greater possibilities for building legal frameworks, by incorporating the legal machine, which would promote greater continuity in the city's public culture policies, an issue identified as one of the foundation's major challenges" (interview with

The process of applying for the Unesco designation began when the city won the call for tenders organised by the Ministry of Culture, which provided consultancy to prepare the application dossier for the Unesco designation. The music category was chosen with the help of a consultancy organised by FROC, as it has historically been the cultural sector with the most diversified institutionalised initiatives and investments, such as: the local school for training musicians; the city's orchestra and choir, which have been running for several years; the annual mega-festival dedicated to Jazz & Blues (which has been running for almost two decades); the private spaces dedicated to the local and independent scene; the frequent hip-hop circles; and, finally, the city's historical relationship with renowned composers and musicians in the country.

We did a lot of research and managed to build the Unesco dossier. This was very important because it actually gave us a revealing and very relevant "diagnosis". In this document, we were able to see where the city's bottlenecks and weaknesses lie. At the same time, we were able to get a glimpse of how the community sees music management here in the city, both on the part of the public authorities and on the part of the private sector. Through this dossier, we were able to better understand the relationship between local musicians and society at large. So this dossier will be important for future initiatives. We collected very important data, which will continue to generate reflection and debate.²³³

Cristiane Regis, president of *Rio de das Ostras Foundation for Culture*, given to the authors on March 11, 2022).

²³³ Interview with Carlos Pimentel, FROC advisor, given to the authors on August 15, 2019.

During the process of drawing up the dossier and application, the technicians and advisors report that local residents generally supported the initiative. Musicians, however, showed some resistance to the application, given the criticisms and challenges that they experience on a daily basis. In any case, according to the interviews conducted, the proposal for the UNESCO designation promoted an in-depth diagnosis of the music scenes and the public policies that had been implemented up to that point by the foundation. Amongst the issues addressed were: a) the critical perceptions of local musicians in relation to the Jazz & Blues Festival; b) the difficulties in absorbing professional musicians in the city by the local music market; c) the identification of specific challenges in building an audience for original music; d) the existence of a music market that is still underexplored; e) the lack of measures to protect nighttime musicians, such as guaranteeing fee collections; e) and, finally, the projections that more consistent independent scenes could develop, but that these would need greater support from the public authorities.

FROC technicians also made some comments about the criticisms that have already been mentioned here and which, for the most part, are directed at the limitations of the Jazz & Blues Festival proposal.

The dossier showed how musicians actually see Jazz & Blues. The fact is that local musicians don't feel empowered at this event; that is, they realise they have no place as headliners at the festival [...]. Their condition is very different from that of musicians from other countries or other cities in the country who come to play here.²³⁴

²³⁴ *Idem.*

They also commented that professional musicians – through the technical courses offered by FROC – often do not find space and opportunities to turn this knowledge into a source of income on a daily basis.

Although we have a professional music school, we could ask ourselves: how well prepared are these local artists to face this complicated market? What's more, although we have *Taberna da Amendoeira* and *Confraria do Jamelão* venues, unfortunately there aren't many other ones in the city. As an alternative, many musicians end up producing events, because otherwise they wouldn't play anywhere else [...]. Unfortunately, many people give up fighting for a local music scene and end up moving to Rio.²³⁵

The lack of venues specifically dedicated to local music scenes is a constant complaint in informal conversations, even amongst the region's entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs who work in the restaurant and nightlife business in Rio das Ostras, in general, bet on the consumption of drinks and food, without live concerts being an important differentiator for bars and restaurants.

If you consider that this is a small town, you could say that we have a reasonable nighttime music market. A percentage of the bars eventually pay a musician – usually a one-off – to add a little something to the atmosphere. Then, the artist who keeps the customer spending might interest a businessperson. In general, however, musicians are unfortunately not given much prestige. Entrepreneurs don't usually offer new attractions for the place: that is, for these entrepreneurs, investing

²³⁵ Interview with Renata Cabral, FROC advisor, given to the authors on August 15, 2019.

in music isn't exactly part of their strategies for creating new client bases.²³⁶

Despite that, some exceptions – businesspeople who honour these artists – have been identified in the city.

It's possible to identify some nightclubs that are emerging in the live-music market. This is the case with *Confraria do Jamelão*, *Amendoeira*, *Trik Trik*, which are places that already have a different relationship with musicians. They realise that music contributes to the success of their business. In fact, these are places where there is even room for original music and other styles that aren't just the most popular ones.²³⁷

Different actors mentioned the urgent need for actions to train new audiences. In order for private music venue initiatives to become attractive to the business community and sustainable for the city in terms of absorbing these new audiences, it is important to emphasise the urgent need for actions to form a new qualified labour force and also essential to foster public demand. In this sense, Regina Muniz, owner of *Taberna da Amendoeira* (a bar that has been around for more than 20 years, with strong links to original-music performances) argues that concerts held in public spaces could become a way of increasing this demand. She mentions (along with other interviewees) the difficulty of organising music events in the city's streets.

I think Rio das Ostras is lacking in terms of training an audience interested in local music. Performing live music in public spaces could have an educational effect. This is important, as people get used to consuming these concerts at free events.

²³⁶ *Idem.*

²³⁷ *Ibidem.*

There are many prohibitions and difficulties in organising even small street events.²³⁸

In this sense, Diogo Spadaro, a well-known local musician, also adds that musicians do not feel entirely safe holding public concerts, as they struggle to find legal support for these street events, fearing repression from the local police.

Unfortunately, Rio das Ostras doesn't have a nightclub circuit. There are a few bars that honour music, such as *Confraria Jamelão* and *Taberna [da Amendoeira]*, which are wonderful places. Every time we go back to play in these places we get a bigger and more diverse audience [...]. We've already thought about organising ourselves and increasing this audience-building work by taking to the streets [...] but we've been through so many complicated situations that it creates a lot of insecurity. We often have the impression we can make music somewhere [...] the feeling is that for a while we've got some people used to getting together spontaneously [...]. The fact is, if the police show up, you run the risk of being arrested or losing your equipment. Despite the difficulties, there's a lot of potential for new audiences to form, and this is very important for the cultural life of Rio das Ostras.²³⁹

For other artists, such as Micha Devellard – a well-known musician and an important LGBTQIA+ leader (and a member of the City Council of Culture) –, this possibility of occupying public spaces in the form of circles and small events should be explored more often by musicians from the local scene, especially after the approval of

²³⁸ Interview with Regina Muniz, owner of the *Taberna da Amendoeira* bar, given to the authors on October 18, 2019.

²³⁹ Interview with Diogo Spadaro, musician from band *Os Abufelados*, given to the authors on October 30, 2019.

the 2018 City Law 2177, which, in theory, ensures the right of street artists to perform in Rio das Ostras.

It's a recent and important law, which makes it possible to ensure a livelihood for street artists, provided, of course, the rules for regulating the city's public space are respected [...]. In fact, the City Council of Culture is currently concerned about widely publicising this law, because we realise there's a lot of ignorance. We are therefore committed to the public recognition of this law, to respecting it as a right for artists to occupy Rio das Ostras: often, these occupations generate tensions and confusion involving residents, artists, and the police. In an attempt to offer guidance to the population, this Council, of which I'm a member, intends to publicise a booklet more widely in order to provide further clarification.²⁴⁰

5.4 Music as an important vector in leveraging local development

Although there are major difficulties in boosting the music scenes in Rio das Ostras, we must recognise the recent efforts of progressive technicians working at FROC, who are seeking not only to increase communication channels (through webradio and the City Council) and possible synergies between the various segments and interests present in the city (Bennett *et al.*, 2014), but also to foster the dynamism of musical (and cultural) initiatives that already exist in the city.

We consider it very important to listen to the demands of the region before trying to plan and develop our actions. We have

²⁴⁰ Interview with Micha Devellard, local musician and member of the City Council of Culture, given to the authors on June 17, 2022.

a very active and representative City Council of Culture here, which has helped us rethink our line of action and our projects [...]. Rio das Ostras is undoubtedly an extremely musical city, which breathes different genres [...]. Of course, we are aware of that and are developing various relevant lines of action for FROC in the field of music.²⁴¹

We often realise that, despite all our efforts to build diagnoses and listen to the population, we still lack more information and data about the city. I'll give you an example: when we supported artists with basic income during the Covid-19 pandemic, we were able to create a more up-to-date register, which is fundamental if we want to effectively develop more inclusive public policies. Before the Aldir Blanc law, we had about a hundred artists registered with the city. Currently, we have almost 800 registered artists and art groups [...]. As far as possible, we have tried to work on different fronts, supporting various socio-cultural projects in the city [...]. Festivals are more the responsibility of the Department of Tourism and are very important for the city's dynamism. Our line of action is more along the lines of offering: on the one hand, training in the cultural field through workshops and courses and, on the other, encouraging initiatives and giving opportunities to artists in the region.²⁴²

At the same time, in their statements and in their dialogue with this foundation, actors have increasingly emphasised the need for greater flexibility in urban regulations, especially with a view to making performances in public spaces more viable. For several of those

²⁴¹ Interview with Cristiane Regis, president of Rio de das Ostras Foundation for Culture, given to the authors on March 11, 2022.

²⁴² Interview with Mariana Gomes Ribeiro, FROC advisor, given to the authors on March 10, 2022.

interviewed, this strategy could be relevant and capable of making a significant contribution to the necessary process of “forming audiences” in the city, or rather: this initiative could help to build more sustainable (in the sense that it would more effectively incorporate different segments of the local population) and more plural music scenes²⁴³ – in short, that is the very reason why it should be incorporated into future local public policies that are more in tune with the collective interests of the place.

Throughout this study, it was possible to see that the preparation of the application dossier for the Unesco designation contributed to the identification of problems and also of potentialities experienced in a less visible way in the city and which are directly and indirectly related to the music sector, to the perception that music can be a vector for local development.²⁴⁴ Thus, as we have already mentioned, the application led to the construction of an interesting diagnosis of the

²⁴³ Of course, the actors mentioned, in their interviews, the importance of there being more radio programmes dedicated to publicising the work of musicians from the local scene. In fact, in general, they emphasise the importance of: a) using traditional media and the internet (social media) to publicise the work of these artists; b) continuing to invest in the musical training of local actors; c) incorporating the young people who have been trained in cultural production (at the Fluminense Federal University) into creative initiatives with the local musicians’ collectives; d) and, finally, opening up institutional spaces for the groups from the local scenes in these different initiatives – especially in the programming of events and festivals (medium and large scale) – that are being held regularly in the city.

²⁴⁴ When filling in the dossier, advisors and technicians reported that, with a certain amount of surprise and enthusiasm, they identified existing musical scenes and collectives (with little visibility in the city) that helped the government to fulfil the requirements demanded by Unesco, such as: ongoing international musical partnerships; the existence of an authorial music scene; musical projects that reach vulnerable audiences; the presence of groups involved with themes such as Black identity and feminism; and, finally, active groups exchanging, selling, and collecting musical artefacts. The application was identified by the vast majority as a significant initiative that could generate new synergies and positive externalities relevant to the locality in the future (interview with Mariana Gomes Ribeiro, FROC advisor, given to the authors on March 10, 2022).

city that could have been the starting point for the re-construction of a public-policy agenda, more committed to the construction of democracy and sustainable development in the region. Unfortunately, the lack of transparency and debate on the criticisms pointed out by Unesco (in its negative assessment of the award of the City of Music designation to this territory) and the “culture of discontinuity” of public policies that prevails in various areas of the country (Rubim, 2007; Barbalho *et al.*, 2011; Calabre, 2008) make it difficult to envisage future projections for the region.

Furthermore, during fieldwork, interviews and informal conversations with artists, actors, and local leaders, it became clear that city authorities need to effectively resume their partnership with the Fluminense Federal University, which has been somewhat strained since May 2014, when artistic performances took place as part of the *2nd Research & Creation Seminar* – organised by the Cultural Production degree at this higher education institution – and which, at the time, shocked the city’s more conservative social segments.²⁴⁵ Bearing in mind that this public university is the only one operating in the locality (and is therefore the one that has been contributing to the local labour force, which will directly and indirectly serve the project of building a creative city in Rio das Ostras), the resumption

²⁴⁵ For more information on the controversy generated by these artistic and cultural performances, see the following newspaper articles: Azevedo, Reinaldo. *Universidades brasileiras em tempos petistas. Veja*, São Paulo, June 3, 2014 (Available at: <<https://veja.abril.com.br/coluna/reinaldo/universidade-federal-em-tempos-petistas-vagina-e-cos-tura-da-num-evento-chamado-xereca-satanik-na-uff-voces-estao-lendo-direito-che-fao-do-departamento-diz-que-os-criticos-da-festa-sao-conservadores-e-de/>>, accessed: July 8, 2022); Machado, Isadora. *O que a mídia não contou sobre o Xerec Satânik. Pragmatismo Político*, São Paulo, June 17, 2014 (Available at: <<https://www.pragmatismopolitico.com.br/2014/06/o-que-midia-nao-contou-sobre-o-xerec-sataniks.html>>. Accessed: July 9, 2022); Newsletter. *Festa satânica da UFF terá ato de apoio. O Globo*, Rio de Janeiro, June 2, 2014 (Available at: <<https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/educacao/festa-satanica-da-uff-tera-ato-de-apoio-12687369>>, accessed: July 8, 2022).

of this institutional articulation on the horizon is strategic, urgent, and necessary.

Despite the difficulties highlighted in this chapter, there are still some controversies on the path that could lead to new levels of development in the region, one that is based on the promotion of a local music culture. These controversies are obvious to the most attentive observer and will certainly have to be addressed, giving priority to the collective wealth (especially the less visible one) and interests of the territory. Even so, the heterogeneity of groups interested in planning and working in the music and entertainment sector (cultural producers, private-sector players in the tourism and gastronomy areas, cultural technicians and professional musicians, amongst others) may lead the city to achieve the status of a relevant creative city in the state of Rio de Janeiro in the future.

6. The making-with of fireflies, ants, and butterflies: pollination and re-existence

As we have seen throughout this book, the four cities that we researched are not exactly “model cities” for local development or for implementing diligent and democratic public policies. Despite progress in many areas, they continue to face various challenges to the balanced growth of these territories. At the same time, we started with the assumption that these case studies indicate enormous growth potential for the state of Rio de Janeiro, and that, as local assets, regardless of the more or less adequate public policies implemented, they have been “pollinating” (Moulier-Boutang, 2010) and producing synergies between the sectors and chains of culture, tourism, communication and information, and entertainment in general.

Thus, despite all the potential and enormous relevance of these creative production chains mentioned above in the urban fabric of the city of Rio, the recent trajectory of the state capital, especially after the Olympics and the mega-events of the 2010s, suggests a context of crisis and stagnation. In a way, the Port Zone is almost a kind of “microcosm” of what has been happening in general in this metropolis: on the one hand, we see a process of loss of dynamism in the locality as well as discontinuities in public policies. We could mention the gentrification of the port and the construction of large urban facilities in the run-up to the aforementioned international mega-events; later, a period marked by a lack of cultural policies that translated, in general,

into a lack of support for the creative sectors during the administration of Mayor Marcelo Crivella (obviously also aggravated by the long Covid-19 pandemic); and, finally, the resumption of large-scale inductive projects and processes with the return of Eduardo Paes to office. On the other hand, we see the vitality, tactics, and cunning of the “sonic-musical territorialities” built by the actors in everyday life (Herschmann & Fernandes 2014) who creatively occupy the public space of this locality, that is, the “re-existences” of the activism from various collectives (Fernandes *et. al.*, 2014). *al.*, 2022), especially those engaged practices that revolve around “Black music” (Gilroy, 2001) and continue to negotiate (despite all the adversities) an attractive, more inclusive city of gatherings. In addition, our study detected a growing tendency in women playing a leading role in the city’s street music scene, organising more welcoming events (in a context of worsening political polarisation and increasing urban violence) and a more intersectional political agenda, which is attracting other minorities, especially from the local LGBTQIA+ scene.²⁴⁶

As for Paraty, the award of UNESCO status (in gastronomy) and its designation as a mixed heritage site (despite some problems and imbalances in the local environment that have received little media coverage) have given this small town more prestige and further consolidated the tourism model based on heritage and major festivals (three of which are music-focused), which have effectively brought significant socioeconomic benefits to the area (after all, Paraty and Rio are two of the country’s main tourist destinations). At the same time, some problems continue to stand in the way of building new levels of development in the region: for example, unfortunately there

²⁴⁶ As we mentioned in Chapter 1, certain areas traditionally occupied by “Black musical art” (in Pequena África, Rio’s Port Zone) paved the way for other sonic-musical territorializations led by women and, later, other queer minorities.

are still few alternatives for quality of life and mechanisms for social advancement for young people and the poorest segments, which is reflected in the significant levels of violence and crime in the city and its surroundings. The proposed construction of new cultural facilities, the expansion of workshops and courses, and the creation of the Vocational Training Centre are the result of progressive public policies, seeking to counterbalance shortcomings and meeting local demands (such as the lack of universities and HEIs in the region. In other words, to compensate for the lack of job opportunities beyond the tourism chain and, at the same time, to qualify the local workforce. In addition, significant segments of the city's population – such as young people, artists, and craftspeople (most of them from the indigenous groups in the surrounding area) – have been demanding, for many years, the right to occupy the public space in Paraty's Centro Histórico, but have repeatedly come up against city regulations and Iphan's inflexibility, which prohibit the occupation of these areas. This has led to controversy, tensions, and questions in the city, not least because, during regular mega-festivals, permits are granted and these rules are transgressed. That is, during these major events, the criteria for preserving the historical heritage and the "laws that prohibit the disturbance of order" are generally set aside in the name of the interests of the main political and economic groups operating in the region.

The case of Conservatória is quite curious because, although it is a district of the city of Valença – therefore not having complete autonomy to develop public policies –, it has managed to build a long cycle of success associated especially with the *Seresteiro* Movement (of an amateurish nature), based on certain tactics and cunning (De Certeau, 1995) developed by local actors and leaders and which has been mobilising actors and visitors on the weekends in the village for decades. Despite the current crisis in *seresteiro* activism (which has led to controversy and suggestions that professional artists should

be involved in serenades and *serestas* on weekends), the tourist and creative music scheme continues to show significant results, further generating significant socio-economic benefits and quality of life (the village does not have significant rates of urban violence, unemployment, or environmental issues). Thus, with the financial collaboration of local businesspeople and innkeepers (with associative practices), the Conservatória Commercial, Rural, Industrial, and Tourist Association has managed to raise funds, allowing the village, despite the country's crisis, to keep organising and holding a diversified annual musical calendar of events and festivals, linked to the weekly meetings of the highly popular *seresteiros*. All this has made it possible to continue building significant synergies between the various initiatives and creative production chains in the city.

And finally, in the case of Rio das Ostras, the unsuccessful attempt to apply for UNESCO designation (for music) represented a significant step in the process of maturing the technical debate on creativity, which has also led the city government to invest more in musical and cultural production in the locality. Our research found not only a growing commitment on the part of the Rio de das Ostras Foundation for Culture in holding events, programmes, and workshops aimed at fostering local culture and meeting the demands of the resort's population, but also that even within the predominant tourist model – based on large festivals – there has been a greater concern with the more significant inclusion of artists and part of the local workforce in these events. Although there are important fora for debate, such as the City Council, to discuss strategies that promote the densification of this territory and further local development, the city still lacks more integration and the construction of a more fruitful dialogue with some key institutions in innovation and training programmes, such as the Fluminense Federal University.

At this point, the reader may have legitimately asked themselves: why write this book on “creative cities” now? Why invest in this type of study (even if these cities are not a model of sustainable local development)? What is the point of developing this work at a time when academic knowledge is being devalued in the country and one feels the inconsolable sensation of living in a “wasteland”? What are the reasons for trying to develop these reflections at a time when most people realise that we are living through a profound “crisis” (of various kinds and largely deflated by the clumsy administration of former president Jair Bolsonaro, the long Covid-19 pandemic, the fluctuations in the price of oil, the return of high inflation, sociopolitical polarisation and violence, the increase in violence, and the lack of willingness to build dialogue and understanding between different groups and social segments, as well as, finally, the growth of misery in various parts of the country)?

We could argue that, more than ever, the construction of collective projects that have the ability of promoting the sustainable growth of localities and that, at the same time, can meet the demands of the local population, has become a matter of great urgency and fundamental to reversing, though modestly, this context of crisis.

There are tangible elements that allow us not to succumb to a defeatist and apocalyptic perspective. According to data organised by Firjan (2019), the GDP of creative businesses in the state of Rio de Janeiro totalled almost R\$25 billion at the end of the 2010s, equivalent to almost 4% of all the wealth produced there. These figures also suggest that there are around 25,000 creative companies in this Southeastern macro-region of the country, corresponding to 5.6% of the total. These figures demonstrate the importance of creative activities for the state economy, even more so if we recognise, on the one hand, that no state in Brazil has a greater share of creative companies in its total number of companies than Rio de Janeiro; and, on the other

hand, that only São Paulo surpasses Rio in the percentage share of creative GDP (São Paulo today concentrates around 47% of Brazil's "creative GDP", generating R\$78.35 billion per year). The same survey also highlights that the state of Rio de Janeiro has the highest average salary in the creative economy (over R\$10,000 a month), which is well above the national average for this productive sector (around R\$7,000 a month), equivalent to more than three times the average salary in Rio de Janeiro, of about R\$3,200 (Firjan, 2019). Creative jobs in the state are highly concentrated in the capital, i.e. 74% of formal creative jobs are located in the city of Rio (Figueiredo & Jesus, 2020). Analysing this data reveals two aspects: not only that the creative economy is indeed an important source of wealth and revenue in this macro-region, but also that more conditions need to be created for a better distribution of creative jobs in other cities in the state. Beyond the metropolis of Rio, that is, this publication offers elements to rethink the potential for "sustainable local development" (Buarque, 2008) in other medium-sized and small towns, both on the coast (such as Paraty and Rio das Ostras) and in the countryside (as is the case with Conservatória), in the areas of culture, entertainment, and tourism.

At the end of March 2022, when we were in the final stages of our research and in the process of writing this book, we were informed that the Rio de Janeiro State Department of Culture and the Creative Economy (Secec) had created the *Laboratório de Cidades Criativas* ("Creative Cities Laboratory"). With the support of private consultancy firms, Secec implemented three programmes at the end of Governor Claudio Castro's administration: one in the audiovisual area (called *Cine +*); another aimed at training in public schools (called "Creative Schools"); and a third, in design, which applies

tactical urbanism strategies to squares in some cities.²⁴⁷ According to Secec Secretary Danielle Barros,

[...] when implementing these projects, we try to create certain mechanisms aimed at greater participation by the local population, including local artists and labour [...] the projects in the squares, cinemas, and schools seek to build an identity with the territories, in other words, a relationship with local culture and history [...].²⁴⁸

Analysing the material released by Secec on the three initiatives, in general terms we see that: the Cine+ programme aims to build public cinemas in cities of up to 250,000 inhabitants in the state²⁴⁹; and that the “Creative Schools” initiative apparently proposes retraining teachers and reinforces proposals spearheaded several decades ago by

²⁴⁷ According to information provided by the State Secretary of Culture and the Creative Economy, the Creative Cities Laboratory is organised by *Quitanda Soluções Criativas* and *Instituto BR* and organised by *Rua Walls* with sponsorship from Enel and the Rio de Janeiro State Secretary of Culture and the Creative Economy as well as the Ceará State Secretary of Culture, through the State Culture Incentive Law, executive production by *Cinco Elementos Produções*, with executive consultancy by Marco Zero. For more information, see: *LAB Cidades Criativas é lançado no Estado do Rio de Janeiro. LAB Cidades Criativas*, Rio de Janeiro, March 19, 2022. (Available at: <<https://labciudadescriativas.com.br/lab-cidades-criativas-e-lancado-no-rio-de-janeiro>>. Accessed: August 7, 2022).

²⁴⁸ Interview with Danielle Barros, State Secretary of Culture and the Creative Economy, given to the authors August 13, 2022.

²⁴⁹ The proposal is for the cinemas in this programme to show Brazilian auteur films that mainly deal with human rights and education. In addition, Secec says that these cultural facilities will also be used as multipurpose spaces, where training activities and artistic performances can take place. The programme also provides for technical and artistic training in film exhibition in the cities covered. For more information, see: *LAB Cidades Criativas é lançado no Estado do Rio de Janeiro. LAB Cidades Criativas*, Rio de Janeiro, March 19, 2022. (Available at: <<https://labciudadescriativas.com.br/lab-cidades-criativas-e-lancado-no-rio-de-janeiro>>. Accessed: August 7, 2022).

international organisations (such as Unesco) for the area of education, especially in its interface with innovation and sustainability.²⁵⁰

Of the three Creative Cities Laboratory programmes, the one that is certainly at the most advanced stage is the one in urban design, which has already been implemented in Macaé and Rio das Ostras. Apparently, this programme aims to contribute to the “revitalisation” of some public squares in five cities in Rio de Janeiro, using some tools from “tactical urbanism” (Nogueira & Portinari, 2016), which suggest interventions in the urban space that are temporary and exogenous (which do not necessarily increase local development, creativity in the territory, and/or meet the demands of the local population). According to Danielle Barros: “[...] this joint action, between public authorities and the private sector, shows how much the state has been strengthened [...] these programmes are the face of Rio de Janeiro and of Rio culture”²⁵¹, said the Secretary of Culture and the Creative Economy during the launch ceremony of the Creative Cities Laboratory at the Guanabara Palace.

Despite the possible momentary and more specific positive effects on the localities, it is possible to make at least one criticism of this tactical urbanism programme, even if it is still in its early stages. Analysing the information released, one gets the impression that the population of these cities is generally participating as an adjunct to

²⁵⁰ Secec says that the aim of this programme is to train educators and guide public school students in the cities covered to act more responsibly in the development process, based on the dissemination of knowledge about sustainability, innovation and creativity. For more information, see: *LAB Cidades Criativas é lançado no Estado do Rio de Janeiro*. LAB Cidades Criativas, Rio de Janeiro, March 19, 2022. (Available at: <<https://labcidadescriativas.com.br/lab-cidades-criativas-e-lancado-no-rio-de-janeiro>>. Accessed: August 7, 2022).

²⁵¹ *LAB Cidades Criativas é lançado no Estado do Rio de Janeiro*. LAB Cidades Criativas, Rio de Janeiro, March 19, 2022. (Available at: <<https://labcidadescriativas.com.br/lab-cidades-criativas-e-lancado-no-rio-de-janeiro>>. Accessed: August 7, 2022).

these urban interventions: the feeling is that the proposals, although relatively customised to the localities (incorporating elements of the culture of these cities), seem to have already been duly outlined on the drawing boards of technicians and urban planners and that they tend to produce instant effects on the image of these territories. Therefore, there is no concrete evidence that this type of initiative will support and encourage local creative scenes in the medium and long term (or lead to an improvement in the quality of life in these territories).

Regardless of the discontinuities, the exogenous and almost always inductive perspective that characterise the processes of implementing new public policies in Brazil (which in general is almost always problematic), we would like to end this publication by reminding the reader that culture is biopower, but at the same time that it also underpins initiatives of re-existence (therefore, it is also biopolitical), which have the capacity to resignify everyday life and urban imaginaries.

We would also like to emphasise that, in addition to public policies and economic aspects, we have tried to highlight important and almost invisible processes of resignification by also looking at little-known stories, which weave rhizomatic, inconclusive, and apparently irrelevant plots on a daily basis: in these cartographic studies, we have tried to offer the reader some speculative fabrications, which indicate relevant processes of resignification of urban imaginaries. Thus, throughout this book's chapters, we were able to notice and emphasise that the actors often behaved significantly not only by "pollinating" (like bees) urban plots through their musical networks, but also by sending – like "butterflies" (*papillons*) – relevant political knowledge and sonic messages. Through the agency of the collective musical experience, even in the "darkest of times" recently experienced in the country, they acted like "fireflies", inspiring, with their glow, a more affective, playful, Dionysian, and supportive journey. For example, as we had the opportunity to see in the previous chapters (in which we mapped

these four cities), various minority groups – mainly in sync with the LGBTQIA+ agenda – have achieved a certain prominence in the musical networks of these locations and, in a way, have been successful in creating other urban imaginaries and dynamics, in which it can be said that: a) the right to the city is increasingly considered a basic and fundamental principle; b) and their bodies emerge strengthened by the alliances and intersectionalities built (indeed, they have become increasingly “protagonists” of these collective musical experiences).

And finally, we would like to emphasise that these reflections by “ant” cartographers (drawing on actor-network theory) are not intended to take account of the multiple aspects that are at stake in the cultural dynamics in these cities in the state of Rio. Interacting with some of the actors (especially the more combative ones), the most recurrent feeling that we had was that they continue to bet on “making-with” and that their task is ultimately to “stay with the trouble” (Haraway, 2019a), trying to create lines of escape, dissensualities, *detournements*, which in a way promote micropolitics that resist biopower in these cities. To some extent, they are aware that creative processes and a collaborative stance are fundamental if they are to continue re-existing and building sonic-musical territorialities and “heterotopias” (Lefebvre, 2004; Harvey, 2013), which open up a field of possibilities and enrich the experiences found in everyday life.

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In *The Moving Force of Music*, Herschmann and Fernandes allow us not only to better understand some of the major challenges faced by creative cities in Brazil, but also to question less visible and lesser-known aspects of these cities.

Beyond the much-touted strategies of territorial branding, it is clear that, whether in a metropolis, village, or district, musical networks and connections are the result of the agency of traditional and contemporary practices – which are woven and interwoven in the streets of the city (catalyzing imaginaries and sociabilities) –, pollinating affections, aesthetic experiences, and meaning. Presenting dense, sensitive cartographies that analyse musical dynamics and territorialities constructed in Paraty, Rio, Conservatória, and Rio das Ostras, the authors invite us to rethink the potential for social, cultural, and economic development in the state of Rio de Janeiro from less usual perspectives, developing speculative fictions.

To do that, the authors walk us through a set of critical reflections on the impacts of different strategies and public policies developed in these territories: for example, projects anchored in tourism and mega-events contrast with the slower pace of everyday musical experiences and social interactions built by the actors (many from minority groups), mostly in the public spaces of these cities. Therefore, the premise that runs through this publication is that there is a leading role played by the street – and by those actors who claim their “right to the city” – in the dynamism of these cities of music. In other words, it is to this place that most of the relevant activist initiatives converge, which are resilient and re-exist in the off circuits of these territories.

The Moving Force of Music encourages us to reflect on the processes of formulating development models for creative cities, considering in particular the following questions: Whom do these models and projects benefit? Which dynamics and actors are or should be prioritized in

these locations? How can we promote more inclusive and democratic spaces that value the less visible musical ecosystems in these territories?

Trying to escape from gloomy or more schematic interpretations, Herschmann and Fernandes seek not only to support the reformulation of democratic and sustainable public policies, but also to underline the relevance of the “sonic-musical territorialities” constructed – in actors’ *making-with* in these locations – as capable of resignifying urban imaginaries and experiences. After all, as the authors suggest, life is made and remade on the daily, ensuring alternatives and possible paths.

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The fascination with everyday life in cities has contributed significantly to bringing together and inspiring two researchers whose work focuses on sensible and intelligible interactions in Paraty, Rio, Conservatória, and Rio das Ostras in recent years, especially those revolving around musical experiences. We could go as far as to say that the conviction that these musical manifestations are paradoxically brought about not only by the mechanisms of biopower, but also by local actors through biopolitical initiatives – translated into potent everyday practices of ‘reëxistence’ that foster social inclusion – guided the reflections developed here by these cartographers of festive and transpolitical urban experiences.



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