Globalizing Locations: Production-Consumption Relations in the Hip-hop Movement in Brazil and Portugal

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Abstract: This article is part of the ethnography for the doctoral thesis in social anthropology, in which the fieldwork was conducted in Greater Lisbon and Greater Florianópolis on the hip hop Movement. This analysis addresses two rap styles, Rap Creole, in Lisbon, made predominantly by Cape Verdeans and Angolans immigrants, and in Florianópolis, rap *de quebrada*, a form of expression of the population, mostly black residents, of the periphery. In both rap styles can be perceived the development of an aesthetics that becomes outlined in the tension between the individual and the collective, the global and the local. Based on the styles mentioned here, I reflect on consumption relations that create networks and flows among the hip hop movement in different urban spaces, creating a kind of parallel globalization among the peripheries, but remaking itself in a variety of cultural contexts.

Keywords: *hip hop movement, consumption, rap Creole, rap de quebrada.*

Being in the neighborhood - Being in the world

Good music is that which circulates. This is a phrase that, in different forms, I encountered during my fieldwork and which normally referred to rappers' musical practices. Making this music circulate is important because this is what expands the mobility that gives life to the hip-hop movement. But this movement has some particularities, among which I highlight the importance given to the neighborhood as the privileged space from which this circulation initiates, rising from social networks. The neighborhood is the first indicator of public recognition and rappers turn to it for elements that shape their musical composition.

For each group, we can identify the neighborhood it represents, even if not all the members live there. What is important, is to have social networks in the neighborhood, and this is particularly true in groups of *rap de quebrada*[1], a style located mainly in

the periphery and favelas. Even though there are groups that do not have their names closely associated with a particular neighborhood, most rappers recognize the importance of this aspect and it is quite common to find these references in their music, including references made to more than one neighborhood.

In Portugal, the relationship between rappers and their neighborhoods, which I found in *rap Creole*, mainly performed by young immigrants or children of immigrants, was no different. This style is similar to *rap de quebrada*, in that it has a strong neighborhood presence. Meanwhile, the musicians' condition as immigrants or children of immigrants is as important as these urban spaces and their musical style derives from it.

Both in Brazil[2] and in Portugal[3], the space where rap is located in the city is an important driver and definer of the aesthetic (Ferry, 1994) and musical practices. It is in the neighborhood that the first events of a group take place and where the first recordings circulate. These spaces and the social networks formed in them shape a rapper's attitude, which in addition to being critical and directly related to the experience of what is sung, is defined through the relationship that this rapper has with his neighborhood. Breaking this relationship could imply the loss of this rapper's legitimacy in the space where it was built. When I asked what the neighborhood represented in the musical compositions of the Arma-Zen group, they responded:

> It's the word of those who kept most quiet. The people do not speak, they don't have the opportunity to speak, so they sit there, enjoying

the sound, watching the show. MM: Sometimes they do not speak into the microphone, but they speak to us, they tell us their problems. Sometimes they cry. We see lots of things. […] We have the same experiences. Rap is our means of communication to show things to society, to see what they can do. If they don't want to help, this doesn't disturb us in any way. A: Who? MM: Society, prejudice, we want to shake the prejudice.

Based on this statement, it is possible to see in the group itself a self-attribution of responsibility in relation to the role of communication and social criticism that this musical practice establishes and which takes place both between the group and the neighborhood and between the group and the city/society. In this sense, it is important to be in the neighborhood's events and social networks, but it is also important to get out of the neighborhood and present themselves to the city. Thus, these rappers become mediators, establishing 'bridges' (Simmel, 1998) that initiate in the city.

In the neighborhood, hosting events is also a way to strengthen a relationship and reinforce the condition of belonging to the place and having public recognition, as the members of Arma-Zen emphasize when asked about the places where they are from:

> Arma-Zen is located in a *quebrada*. But the neighborhood that we have performed the most, so far, was Monte Cristo. Arma-Zen has its roots in Monte Cristo. Monte Cristo embraces Arma-Zen so we always try to be there.[…] Every six months we try to do a performance there to

help the posture, change, make a difference. So everything here has value […]. My house is over there, in Monte Cristo. (Arma-Zen)

This *value* that Arma-Zen refers to, and which I highlight in the quote above, expresses the relationship that the group creates with the neighborhood and displays what they call *attitude*. A group that lacks this relationship with the neighborhood is considered to lack attitude. But there has to be reciprocity, it is not enough for the group to want to be part of the neighborhood, it is the *quebrada* that gives the consent, or as they say, Monte Cristo embraced Arma-Zen.

The neighborhood is important and defines the musical production, and in this sense, the music represents the neighborhood, as a social space. It is in the neighborhood and based in its social networks and from the dialog that they establish through music with those who live there, that rap gains legitimacy. The neighborhood shapes the practices of the rappers in the hip-hop movement.

The neighborhood is the space where social relations are built. It is where the people are who recognize themselves in these musical narratives. And it is in the neighborhood where what they want to communicate is received with more intensity or more rapidly. It is possible to state that neighborhoods are privileged spaces and constitutors of these musical narratives and where this musical production first circulates. The shows where the songs are sung, the first recordings, the homemade CDs or raps that go into the MP3s, MP4s etc, initiate their circulation in these neighborhood spaces. Only when these songs are recorded in the

studio and a CD is made, as a result of an independent production, can they be sold in stores. And even when they have a CD in stores, it is mainly in the neighborhood that the production has space to be performed, which gives it legitimacy with the public (*community*). It is from this foundation in the neighborhood that they establish other spaces for the circulation of their music, expanding its sales and making the production-consumption relations within the spaces in the periphery more complex.

The use of technological resources through community radios, Internet radio, Orkut, YouTube, MySpace, etc. allows the music to circulate beyond the boundaries of the neighborhood, considerably expanding the range of the musical production. This process is not only related to rap, since the Internet has made possible the circulation of a multitude of musical genres and styles. Nevertheless, the rappers claim that this circulation limits awareness about the music due to the diversity, the amount of songs and the speed with which the media disseminates this music, a process that somehow makes impedes and diminishes the chances to sell a CD when so many can simply burn one. Because of these technologies the once marketable CD loses its importance because the electronic media allow greater freedom of choice among songs.

The group FV Coerente discussed the difficulties the new technologies created for expanding the broadcast of their musical repertoire, which diminishes, even more, their chances to make a living from their musical production. The group points to the

fact that it is not possible to recover the money invested in recording, making it inviable to record a CD in a studio, which is a goal of virtually all rap groups. FV Coerente is in a preliminary stage in the use of technology and of understanding and developing a command of its consequences for their musical production.

Among the *rap Creole* groups in Portugal, technological resources gain another dimension through actions that have been implemented by the rapper Chullage which have broadened the recording opportunities for these groups by building studios in various peripheral neighborhoods of Lisbon. The first studio that I visited was that of Khapaz[4], located in the neighborhood of Arrentela - Seixal, where Chullage lives and conducts various projects with young people. But this is not the only studio in the neighborhood; he built one in his house where he showed me works still in progress.

Toys made the presence of Chullage's one-year-old sonclearly visible in the apartment'. The enthusiasm with which Chullage showed me the recording works made me realize how much the universe of the hip hop movement is part of the most personal and familiar aspects of his life. The studio was part of the furnishings of the house among the furniture, toys, clothes, photographs and many CDs. But it was clear that the studio is not just for personal use and was used by other rappers, when Khapaz's studio was busy. He was equally enthusiastic as he talked about the importance of having young people from the neighborhood use the recording space for their musical creations. He emphasized that this first

opportunity is crucial for these young people to see the possibility of making rap a profession.

In all these situations, the neighborhood is the privileged space in which the rapper, or group, takes the first steps towards building a biography within the hip hop movement. It is in the neighborhood that the first songs compositions and recordings circulate. The first events are in the neighborhood, which is where recognition and communication with the public happen. The neighborhood is a kind of solid ground on which rap is anchored, through this symbolical-social space that establishes relations of production and consumption.

It is in the neighborhood that many of the 'projects' are conceived and implemented. Schutz (1970 cited in Velho, 2003: 101), defined 'project' as 'conduct organized to achieve specific purposes.' Thus, considering several of the rappers initiatives, we view these 'projects' in the establishment of recording studios and radio stations which enable musical circulation and in the various rap events organized in the neighborhoods of the city. Many other initiatives could be mentioned here, but it is interesting to emphasize this dimension of 'project' that emerges in these endeavors and that is able to implement, modify and transform them from an intense interaction of other individual and collective 'projects' that arise within a 'field of possibilities'.

At this confluence of 'projects', interests, goals, initiatives and proposals, crises, conflicts, tensions, agreements and partnerships are generated that form and energize many of these initiatives. And thus although some people give up, others

stay the course and other 'projects' emerge, expanding the circulation of this aesthetic-musical production. As Velho states (2003:101): 'the awareness and appreciation of a unique individuality, based on a *memory* that gives consistency to biography, is what enables the formulation and execution of *projects*' (emphasis in original). He continues: 'the consistency of the *project* depends fundamentally on the *memory* that provides the basic indicators of a past that has produced the present circumstances, without the awareness of them, it would be impossible to have or develop projects' (emphasis in original). This 'unique individuality' is constructed in these spaces of sociability, in which rap is based, especially in the neighborhoods. In turn, this 'individuality' is anchored in a 'memory', which is also built in this space, incorporating the 'biography' that is shaped by what the rappers refer to as the attitudes of the musicians.

These attitudes are crucial to the implementation of these 'projects', and give legitimacy to and make possible their achievement. To be recognized in your neighborhood for your career in the hip hop movement and for your attitude is decisive to structuring this 'biography'. On several occasions, it is this trajectory and this recognition that keeps the rapper in the hip hop movement, since the vast majority of them do not get any financial resources for their activities, on the contrary, in most cases they have to invest their own money to realize these 'projects'.

To have a recognized career or to simply be able to work and earn a salary with one's activities in the hip hop movement is an 'individual project' of many rappers. I found no case of a

rapper who worked exclusively in the hip hop movement or exclusively in the production of rap music. All the situations that I found involved related activities, such as working with sound equipment, being a salesperson in a store with products for this audience or even opening one's own business, often a store. I did not find a single rapper who could survive financially from his or her musical production, although this is a 'project' coveted by the vast majority of them. The 'fields of possibilities' in these situations are quite restricted, since 'the *project* is not abstractly rational, as I mentioned, but is the result of a conscious deliberation based on the circumstances, the field of possibilities in which the subject is inserted' (Velho, 2003: 103). And the neighborhood acts as a privileged space for the initiation and implementation of many of these 'projects', in which important and defining references for their practices within the hip hop Movement are being built.

Globalizing cities: relations of production-consumption

While the neighborhood is the privileged space for aesthetic and musical practice, it is the conjunction of it with the city and globalized societies (Rose, 1994), that steers constant, ongoing change. Although the paths taken by these groups may be very distinctive, important dialogs are established based on common issues. One such issue is the experience of a racial-ethnic condition, more specifically, the reactions that emerge from it, either from the condition of black immigrants or their children as

is the case of those in rap Creole, in Portugal, or from a history marked by the wake of colonization and slavery in Brazil, as those in the rap de quebrada. These are situations with many specificities, but they allow a discussion about the relations that the city and the country itself build as a function of this condition, which encompasses relations of prejudice, discrimination and inequality.

Communication flows are established as a function of this debate, factors common to living in these cities emerge and opinions about these relationships are described in the music, indicating consumption relations. I do not refer only to consumption of products, but to a way of thinking that expands and is reconstructed on a daily basis in a context that goes beyond the spaces of neighborhood, cities and countries, being much more developed and experienced in terms of ideas, and which defines styles of rap and of life.

The hip hop movement coexists with this dual dimension of being local and global. Globalization, which is present in a positive and negative way is present and gives 'form' to this movement and its consumption relations, and brings a new scenario to the construction of this musical genre. Rap gains distinct contours within this context of globalization, both in terms of production of styles, and in relation to its dissemination, and the relations of consumption that accompany it[5].

This global culture amplifies the diversity and the flow of information, products and ideas. In this globalized world, Beck (2000) draws attention to what he calls the 'abolition of distance', which disappears or diminishes considerably with technological progress, especially that of communication media and transportation. This allows the wide circulation of, and access to products and behaviors. This expansion of the circulation of information and products has generated alternatives that have amplified the practices of this musical genre. Rap emerges from a long history of black American music, which far before the popularity of rap had already manifest itself in black neighborhoods of New York City. What once again arises in this scenario is the use of current technological resources, as well as of the processes that allow the previously unprecedented creation of networks of relations and means of circulation of this musical production, a fact that is not restricted to rap. This music not only benefits from the use of the technological resources that this scenario provides, but also exposes serious consequences of globalization itself, which are part of daily experiences.

The speed with which the hip hop movement circulates and communicates is possible only due to this reality, the world of 'compact time' (Beck, 2000). A performative and aesthetic style, rap is thus a form of communication that builds styles and creates movements of consumption, establishing networks that communicate within the periphery, based on musical styles and lifestyles, with what we could call an 'aesthetic of the peripheries', where other genres are also included.

This music is engaged in communication networks and circulates within them between social and geographical spaces of cities. Even though a wide variety of musical genres have a communicative role, in the case of

rap, this communication is established as a channel of expression for the complaints, protests and projects of a certain population, the residents of these peripheral neighborhoods in the big cities. Thus, many of the rappers benefit from communication channels that they create to circulate this music. There are many rappers who, by taking advantage of these channels, go to the favelas, and peripheries of their cities, or neighboring o other cities to sell their CDs.

The consumption relations established here also steer the audience of this product. There is an intention, there is a population to reach and there is a significant response, including a commercial one, from this population. In Brazil, long before rap reached conventional means of sale, this alternative commercialization was the most important way of making this music circulate. Moreover, it brought significant financial rewards, as shown by the sales of the Racionais group. Even though there is a large and diverse musical production in the suburbs and favelas of Brazil, rap has successfully inserted itself in this environment.

In Florianópolis, even for groups that have their CDs in stores in the city, circulating through neighborhoods to sell them is an important way of disseminating their work. Besides the use of this means of communication to circulate their songs, there is also a previous communication that is in the music itself, through the stories they create. They talk about places that are part of the city and these songs wind up playing the role of communication vehicles, since they report what happens in the city.

Until very recently, these songs circulated quite intensely through unconventional channels, which considerably expanded the range of rap music production, even allowing new musical partnerships. This is what happened with the group Reverso, from Florianópolis, which has a MySpace page with songs that can be accessed on the Internet. Thus, a rap group from Romania not only downloaded music from Reverso, but also produced a version of this music and resubmitted it to the group. The dialogue took place in a quite peculiar manner because the members of Reverso did not speak English, and the group in Romania did not speak Portuguese. Communication was established with the help of a dictionary. One of Reverso's criteria for accepting this partnership was that the Romanian group not include obscenities or offenses against God, since Reverso performs gospel (or Evangelical) rap. Once this condition was accepted, the virtual-musical partnership was established and I had the opportunity to hear it. This musical production speaks of and ventures through the city so that it can circulate there, but not be limited to it, to the contrary, it transposes it, as the Reverso group has shown.

This technological advancement, in addition to making viable channels for circulation of this musical production, enables a faster, cheaper and easier form of recording. With a computer and a suitable program, a rapper can record his music, without forgetting that the opportunities created by the use of this technology also create barriers and impediments, especially because they limit the sales of these CDs. However, these technological practices change and broaden the scope of this aesthetic-

musical production, generating an increase in consumer relations and modifying their connections with the mainstream media.

The relationship between the hip hop movement and the mainstream media has always been troubled, but the musical production of rap creates demands for consumption and needs for circulation of this production that does not require conventional media channels. The spaces that allow circulation of this music are still very limited, both for the sale of CDs, and for broadcast on the radio. For this reason, different forms of media are created, such as independent labels and community radio stations and, on the Internet, record companies that meet specific needs and occupy spaces left open by the mainstream media that doesn't sufficiently promote this type of music on their radio stations.

Appropriating technological resources that make the so called cultural industry possible, such as the large scale reproduction of certain products, this technology is used to facilitate the circulation of music that is outside the conventional commercial circuit. Much more than the dreaded homogenization, here manifestations of heterogeneity appear that are immersed in the diversity that inhabits the urban centers of globalized cities such as Lisbon and Florianópolis.

We cannot delude ourselves to believe that access to these technologies is unrestricted. To the contrary, there are striking differences among rappers, in the use of technology. Even today the simple use of e-mail can be quite difficult for some young people. It is also not the most efficient means of communication among the vast majority of rappers; I found that many of their email addresses were disabled due to lack of use, caused by the difficulty they have gaining access to a computer. Communication is thus conducted more fluidly with mobile phones.

The shortening of distances, 'compact time' (Beck, 2000) or 'time-space compression' (Harvey, 1994) are fundamental to the existence of the hip hop movement, since it is nourished by the constant and permanent contact with the 'outside' in order to create something local. This technological advance provides an increasingly rapid flow of information and goods, of both the hip hop movement itself, as well as the products it generates.

I witnessed attempts to open stores, invest in musical production and create clothing labels linked to the hip hop movement as a way of positioning oneself in the job market. Unfortunately, many of these initiatives have had limited duration, whether because of a lack of experience, financing, or qualification. These attempts are important for understanding the relations of production and consumption.

Investment in a profession is a goal for some and for others a necessity, especially for those who have children. But the ideal is that this profession would be linked to music and especially to rap music and its circulation process. For others, a profession is a way to keep a distance from violence. Many rappers who live in peripheral neighborhoods and slums experience and share stories in which violence by police of drug traffickers and others, is present.

Paradoxically, among the popu-

lation sectors, in which the negative consequences of globalization are more evident, globalization itself, with its fluidity, increases the circulation of the musical practices of the hip hop movement. This is established from a creative process of production-consumption, from a positioning of its condition, its world view of a subjectivity that forms its practices and experiences.

The name of the hip hop movement itself reveals a defining characteristic in this context, that of movement itself. The movement is intensified by the circulation and flows that it builds to implement its practices. But if we think of the geographical areas of the cities and the context of creating artistic and musical production, we are on the opposite pole of globalization, both in socioeconomic terms and in terms of displacement.

Immobility appears to be a synonym for disadvantage in a world where speed is of great value. In this sense, the hip hop movement lies at the intersection of these worlds. As Bauman affirms (2000: 8), 'Globalization divides as much as it unites.' This inherent complexity of globalization is embodied in the hip hop movement through its construction and maintenance, singing about and discussing issues that affect and complicate the lives of populations subjected to adverse effects of globalization, whether they are residents of the suburbs of Brazilian cities or immigrants in Portugal. If in socioeconomic terms the consequences of globalization create and aggravate problems for a population with low education and professional qualification, it is technological advancement, and the uses for which

it is made, that enables reflecting on this context in which many rappers are included. And the two situations are the result of the same globalization.

What I discuss here does not refer only to problems that are aggravated by globalization, but also to how they emerge from the resources that globalization proposes as determinant and essential to understanding or getting closer to this complexity. Considering employment, in Portugal, many rappers are in displaced living conditions and, for many, this was not the first or the last country where they would go in search of work. One example is that of a 34-year-old rapper, born in Sao Tome and Principe, who immigrated at the age of 10 with his family to Angola because his parents' were looking for work. At 19, he went to Portugal on his own initiative to look for a better employment and stayed for 14 years working in 'construction' as he told me referring to his activity as a construction assistant.

Three years ago he started working as a computer instructor at a social agency. He was one of four brothers who was born in Sao Tome and Principe and did not remain in his country of origin. His mother, father and one sister are in Angola. One brother is in Spain, another in Holland and he is in Portugal, but he plans to go to another country. In this case, the mobility is not the same as the type that globalization allows to that very limited portion of the world population that is economically favored. While the mobility that Bauman (2000) identifies is associated to the idea of a power to decide, and of choice and consequently of consumption, here the determining factor is labor, or its absence, and the

search for better living conditions, under penalty of not being able to return to one's own country, or the risk of being deported. In Portugal, several of these rappers were never able to return to their country of origin. Others, born in Portugal, say they are Cape Verdean and Angolan, although they have never set foot in their imagined homeland. Many of them submit themselves to the most precarious jobs with poor pay, and which involve many forms of exploitation.

In Florianópolis some neighborhoods need to be reinserted in the city because they are made invisible or denied representation, mainly by the media and tourism. In Portugal, rappers update their condition as eternal immigrants in a society that, even though it has effective policies to minimize some of the problems of immigration, also has many difficulties and these rappers sing about their relations not only with the city but also with their country and their neighborhoods. Added to this is the fact that in Portugal, many of these immigrants come from former Portuguese colonies like Angola and Cape Verde.

Redefining flows: the mobility of rap

It is important to consider some consequences of globalization, based on these 'flows' (Hannerz, 1994), to reflect on how they are felt by different population segments and how they are used by them. Some of these flows, produced in these globalized societies, are used as a way to include many aspects of the locality that many of them sing about. The locality here is related to a belonging to a geographical sense, especially with regard to the neighborhoods and the images they inspire in the city. Highlighting and resignifying this image of the periphery and favelas is a determining element of the hip hop movement. The locality, which emerges through the emphasis on the the sense of belonging to the neighborhood, and which is often denied by the city, is the space of legitimation of a belonging to the hip hop movement. In this sense, mobility is important, but belonging to these spaces also implies involvement in power relations, such as representing the movement in the city. In this case, mobility is a constituent of the musical production of rap, both technologically and in terms of narrative composition. The information needs to circulate, this seems to be the motto of the hip hop movement, and it recreates itself in this mobility. Technology needs to circulate to make music and the more it circulates, the better for the music, as several rappers indicated. What Bauman (2000) is here associating as a definer of power for mobility, is the music that has the role of nurturing it. The mobility denied to individuals is transferred to the music in this context.

Music, besides assuming a role as a communication vehicle, is also an artistic-musical product that circulates. In this sense, the product to which I refer to cannot be seen as a simple commercial relationship, but as a relationship that deconstructs it and resignifies it in the establishment of a debate. This product does not alienate those who produce it, instead, those who produce it establish themselves through the product, constructing their subjectivity by creating the product -

by composing, performing and making their music circulate.

This music, which I discuss here in the field work, which cannot be generalized to any style of rap, arises from subjective constructions of worlds that take the 'form' of musical narratives and thus, establish a dialogue and propose an interaction with the listener. These styles of rap presuppose a relationship based on the debate that it contains or proposes and the acknowledgement of this context that is sung about, is determinant of this artistic-musical production, a situation for which the neighborhood and the city are determinant. It is in these spaces that consumption relations are re-signified from the moment when the sale of this product is achieved by those who created it. This type of sales can indicate difficulties in achieving broader commercialization, but it goes much further because it establishes an important relationship of legitimacy by putting to the test, to be critiqued locally, what it has accomplished. This way, this legitimacy is granted or denied, which expands or restricts the consumption relationsthat are established.

Consumption relations become more complex. We can talk about consumption relations that strengthen the group, within the hip hop movement, even as a marker of belonging. At the same time, we cannot forget that in globalized societies, consumption relations take on unprecedented dimensions, including styles that can become 'products of desire'' of consumption and transformed into fashion. The product, as object, will only exist in relation to the subject, the group; its meaning is generated within the group. A rapper's clothing communicates a social reality. In turn, this communication only has meaning for those who share the construction of this discourse. From the moment they become products that can be sold by major companies and brands and become accessible to 'all', they lose the meaning that formed them, that is, the potential to communicate something that has significance within the group, and therefore create another meaning. The construction of desire (Bauman, 2001) is decisive for strengthening consumption and in this sense, a style can become dissociated from what it represents and become a major 'supplier' of products and images that 'can be sold'. We are talking here about fashion and its ephemeral (Lipovetsky, 1989) quality and alternation.

Bauman (2000) affirms that consumption is a solitary activity, but I think that the target of this consumption may carry the illusion of belonging to a community, when in fact this consumption takes place out of the context of the social space in which it was generated. The style of dressing and the music of the hip hop movement emerge from a creative process, from a discourse about the social that is only possible in the collective, and it is this specificity that makes the new group become a 'provider of novelties' that will supply products for circulation in globalized contemporary societies.

This language, expressed through clothing style, extends its range, goes beyond the boundaries of the group, and becomes fashionable. As Bauman (2000) discusses, fashion does not imply action, or commitment, it allows 'dressing' and 'undressing' identities, in other words, 'being

different'. Imagination is the key component in the acquisition of this product; it produces 'pseudo identities' without any commitment and with the simple option of getting rid of it when appropriate.

Appadurai (1996) points out that this relation between fashion and consumption creates, in many instances, a simulacrum of time, and I would add a simulacrum of behaviors. Like time, behavior can be transformed into a commodity, even if this consumption is related to the 'illusion' of a 'possible world'.

When the rappers say that one must have attitude, this does not have the same validity for those who appropriate this style only on the basis of consumption relations or fashion. In the hip hop movement, consumption relations are crucial and cannot be viewed in isolation. Such relations are associated with relations of production within the hip hop movement and they gain meaning in it. There is in this sense, agency and legitimacy in the consumption relations.

In the hip hop movement, much more than the appearances of the clothing style, the relations of production and consumption that emerge speak of other issues, about ways of being in the world, 'webs of significance', as Geertz (1973) reminds us, in his definition of culture. The constructions of these meanings, which appear in some of the definitions of consumption outlined above, are determinant within the hip hop movement, however, they go beyond it and are structured in the relations of production and consumption that they establish and create.

Aesthetics of the peripheries

It is the movement that the rappers implement in this complex relationship between production and consumption that determines and legitimates its trajectory within the hip hop movement. To see only the consumption relations in the hip hop movement, would be to ignore one side of the coin - and there is no value to a coin with only one side. The same thing happens when one perceives these two actions separately and without contextualizing them. In this case, the peripheries have only recently been thought of as places of consumption. In this sense, the hip hop movement that emerges in these spaces, creates within them its relations of production and consumption and opens the door to production and circulation in spaces that are usually discredited. This then becomes a legitimate space for production and circulation of the hip hop movement practices.

The periphery is visualized and promoted in the hip hop movement, through an aesthetic that not only gives new meaning to relationships established internally, but is also projected in a broader dialog with the city, suggesting other forms of representations of these spaces.

This musical production flows through '[...] an alternative circuit of distribution of records, through stores specializing in black music, such as the Grandes Galerias in downtown Sao Paulo, a traditional meeting point of Sao Paulo rappers. Rap thus established a circuit parallel to that of the cultural industry to make its success more effective.' (Guimarães 1999: 42 In: Andrade, 1999). This is a feature of the hip hop movement

- the creation of new spaces to make their production circulate is something constantly present in the practices of many rappers. Far from the million dollar recording industry behind U.S. rap, in Brazilian territory the paths need to be conquered and even created. They criticize the U.S. recording industry for discharacterizing this musical genre to earn large sums of money and this critique is applied to rappers who submit themselves to these conditions.

A large portion of rap music production in Brazil is the work of independent labels. As Herschmann (2005) indicated, these labels are defended by the rappers as a form of 'resistance' to the cultural industry, which they fear might discharacterize their work, and are also seen to be unprofessional. The rappers especially complain about the lack of commitment to the payment of the artists' rights. The hip hop movement creates different forms of making its discourses visible and technology is present in all of them in various forms. This music is defined by and takes shape through a close connection to the technological advancements of its time. From the cassette tape in the 1970s and 1980s, to the CDs burnt at home, one can easily notice the long distance traveled in the production and circulation of rap.

A studio-recorded CD with cover and booklet is part of most rappers' plans. There aren't many who have achieved this feat and they report in detail the problems they face, such as saving money for five years, working as a waiter, a machine operator, in a building supply store and as *back stage staff* to be able to record their first *professional* CD. The lyrics of all the CDs discuss the difficulties in realizing the recordings. In many cases, these projects do not materialize. And even when they achieve their recording goals, the rappers face sales problems, mainly due to the easy reproduction that technology allows, creating a paradoxical situation.

Many rappers embark on true adventures to promote and sell their CDs. Two rappers from the Arma-Zen group told me that one week before they had a show, they drove down federal highway BR 101 by motorcycle to the city of Tubarão, in southern Santa Catarina State. Even without knowing anyone in the city and having only one telephone contact, they took a bag of CDs to sell. This helped to promote the group's work before the show. One reported the great surprise of having one of his songs sung by a Arma-Zen fan who was only 5 years old. 'He sang everything until the end. I could'nt believe it', the rapper said in a mixture of satisfaction, pride and excitement to see his work recognized. Once again, one can see through this example that other channels, other 'flows' are established to circulate the musical production.

The weak support for promotion of the group's work is identified as one of the problems in selling their CD. That is why they believe the best way to sell their CD is to travel through the communities. This maintains direct contact with the community in which they disseminate their work and recognizes an important partnership in these *communities*, since it is not only the business relationship that is established in this contact, but also the construction of a legitimacy of their work, of their music.

It is impossible not to question the

complexity that permeates the musical experience of these groups and the circulation of these songs. If years ago, in Florianopolis, having a song recorded and released was possible only via a studio CD, this CD can now be recorded at home. While the first CDs were sold in stores or directly by the rapper, the Internet has considerably expanded the opportunity to spread this musical production, although without commercial return. This technological resource allows increased access to the musical production of different contexts, whether in Brazil or Portugal. Even though other musical styles use the same technological resources, rap is distinguished by having, at its origin, the appropriation of electronic technology as a form of producing this music.

The musical production involving these groups, especially in large urban centers of these countries, has been perceived as an important commercial sector. In addition to the recording companies, this musical production also stimulates the sales of clothes, TV and radio programs, parties, shows and magazines, which create and, more recently extend, a major consumption circuit. The relationship between production and consumption expands, broadening the symbolic and financial circulation. This circulation of musical production in the peripheries of big cities establishes or opens an important field of visibility of the periphery. Referring to the neighborhood that one comes from gives legitimacy to what is sung, since it is not enough to just sing about reality, it is necessary to experience it, and the belonging to the neighborhood places the rapper in this production-consumption relationship.

This attitude, which arouses admiration among many rappers, including groups of rap de quebrada and rap Creole, comes from black people who have stood out in the hip hop movement and who come from the lower classes, and who have succeeded despite the adversities while they continue to conduct their activities and their social, commercial and artistic projects within their neighborhoods. What makes this attitude relevant is exactly this commitment that they strive to express in their actions.

Notes

[1] *Quebradas* (Brazilian slang): spaces considered marginalized by the city that may be located in peripheral neighborhoods. The *quebradas* do not refer to specific geographical boundaries. The term can be associated with a neighborhood, a slum, some streets, but in general, it is related to a space of social belonging.

[2] About the Moviment Hip Hop in Brasil, see: Andrade (1999), Dayrell (2005), Herschmann (1997, 2005), Vianna (1998), etc. In Florianópolis see: Souza (1998, 2009), etc.

[3] About the Moviment Hip Hop in Portugal, see: Campos (2009), Cidra (2002), Contador and Ferreira (1997), Fradique (2003).

[4] *Khapaz* is an association located in the south bank of the Tagus River in the parish of Arrentela - municipality of Seixal and it is 'the result of the enthusiasm of young African descents. What integrated them to the game was the love for music - whether the one connected to their African roots, or to the modern approaches like Hip Hop

[...]' (Available at: http://www.khapaz-saladeensaio.blogspot.com. Accessed on May 15, 2009). In addition to activities focused on musicality, *Khapaz* develops a series of projects related to health, education, etc. with the local community.

⁵ The discussion on the relationship between consumption and material culture in anthropology is quite significant. Even indirectly, we can perceive it in the classic ethnographies of Malinowski ([1922] 1978) and in the analysis of Mauss ([1925] 2003) among others, and more directly, arguing theoretically these relations, contemporary authors of social sciences such as Douglas and Isherwood (2004), McCracken (2003), Canclini (2001), Bourdieu (1994) Featherstone (1995), Campbell (2001), etc.

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