

## **SAMBA AND JAZZ OVERSEAS: THE TEXTUAL URBAN LANDSCAPE OF PARIS BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW MUSIC FROM AMERICA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

We present in this paper a postdoctoral research that aims to understand the representations-synthesis of Brazil and the USA in Europe through jazz, *samba* and dances originating from these musical genres. We supposed that they are related to the transformations that occurred in the urban textual landscape in the inter-war period. Transformations related to the soundscape, with popular music coming from other cultures; by the new social dances related to these songs practiced in the dances and transformed into spectacle at the music halls; by the new fashion, which allows the female body to dance freely; by the graphic arts and architecture that, under the influence of art deco, “simplify” the romantic art nouveau shapes. We believe that such musical genres can be considered as a mark of the Americas in Europe. So in this text, we will outline the arrival of the new musical genres of the Americas in Paris, observing the transformation in the texture of the urban textual landscapes of Paris from the materialities that make up this texture: Art Deco façades and the signs of the dancings that shelter new music from the Americas; the advertising posters of balls, dancings and music halls; the fashion possibly influenced by the new dances from America, and, finally, the jazz and *samba* songs composed between the two World Wars that mention Paris.

### **KEYWORDS**

Jazz; inter-war period; Lisbon; Paris; *samba*; textual urban landscape

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### **RESUMO**

O presente artigo apresenta resultados preliminares de um projeto de pesquisa pós-doutoral que tem como objetivo principal entender as representações-síntese do Brasil e dos EUA na Europa por meio do *jazz* e do *samba*, relacionadas às transformações estéticas ocorridas em Paris e em Lisboa no período entre-Guerras. Transformações que passam pela paisagem sonora urbana, pelas novas danças sociais relacionadas a estas músicas praticadas nos bailes e transformadas em espetáculo nos *music halls*; pela moda, que libera o corpo feminino para dançar livremente; pelas artes gráficas e na arquitetura que, sob a influência do *art déco*, “simplificam” as formas românticas *art nouveau*. Acreditamos que os então novos gêneros musicais possam ser considerados como uma marca das Américas no Velho Continente. Neste artigo, apresentamos resultados parciais da pesquisa ao traçarmos um panorama das transformações na paisagem textual urbana de Paris e da chegada das novas músicas das Américas, observando materialidades que constituem a tessitura das paisagens textuais urbanas da capital francesa: as fachadas *art déco* e os letreiros dos *dancings*, os cartazes publicitários dos bailes e dos espetáculos, a moda possivelmente influenciada pelas novas músicas e danças e canções interpretadas por artistas brasileiros e norte-americanos naquele período que fazem alusão a Paris.

### **PALAVRAS-CHAVE**

*Jazz*; paisagens textuais urbanas; Paris; período entre-Guerras; *samba*

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## APPROXIMATIONS BETWEEN URBAN TEXTUAL LANDSCAPES AND POPULAR MUSIC

Without neglecting the semantic concepts for text, we make an option to work with a text idea more in sense with the proposal of Gonzalo Abril who says “everything is text” (Abril, 2007). When we say here “text”, we consider it as “fragments of other texts connected, (re)combined for the production of a new text. So, our choice is in the sense of a more fluid definition, open to intertextuality and to the relationship established between texts” (Vaz, Mello Vianna & Santos, 2017, p. 250). We agree with Luchiari who states:

in each time of the History, the social process improves materiality to the time, producing forms / landscapes. The built landscapes of society reveal its social structure and model places, regions and territories. The landscape is the materiality, but it is what allows the society the concreteness of its symbolic representations. (2001, pp. 13-14)

Therefore, from the notions of text and landscape on which we worked more extensively on previous researches, we consider textual landscapes as “an articulation of textualities of different reliefs, or different materialities, such as image, sound, typography, architecture, fashion. The textualities form the landscape and the articulation of the reliefs mobilizes the senses” (Vaz, Mello Vianna & Santos, 2017, p. 251). In this way, we understand that popular music is a relief that constitutes the urban textual landscape and, therefore, must be investigated as its possibilities to articulate senses in this landscape.

We believe that the *samba* and jazz that came from the Americas are related to the transformations that occurred in the urban textual landscape of Paris (and “reverberated” in other European capitals, such as Lisbon) in the inter-war period.

In 2016, we celebrated in Brazil the centennial of the record of the first recorded *samba* – *Pelo telefone* – by Ernesto Joaquim Maria dos Santos, known as Donga, released in the carnival of 1917. In the United States, in the same year and month (February 1917), was recorded and released by Victor records the first compact of jass (according to the spelling of that time) with two songs: Livery Stable Blues and Dixieland Jass Band One-Step.

The *samba* in the 1930s and beginning of the 1940s, for technical reasons (Tatit, 2004; Tinhorão, 1981), cultural reasons (Muniz Sodré, 1998) or politics reasons (Jambreiro, 2004) becomes a representation symbolic of Brazil, just as jazz can be considered as a mark of American culture (Hobsbawm, 1990) even before the rock n’roll. Some studies have already been developed in the sense of such discussions around *samba* and jazz as elements of popular culture that conform a supposed collective identity in their original countries. In a different perspective of such previous researches, we prefer here to think about such musical genres as foreigners on the European continent, as they are assimilated by foreign listening and understood as representations of these supposed collective identities, even before being accepted in Brazil and the USA.

Brazilian and American musicians cross the ocean in the inter-war period and the so-called new dances of the Americas (*samba*, Charleston, fox trot, lindy hop and swing dances, among others) associated with these musical genres are established in Paris

at that time. As they travel to Europe, “sambistas” and jazz musicians assimilate other influences and also transform the local landscape.

French jazz is worldwide known. The “jazz manouche” was created in France from American jazz. *Samba*, on the other hand, also changes when passing through Europe, incorporating influences of Portuguese *modinha* and jazz. Alfredo da Rocha Viana Filho, so called Pixinguinha, popular musician historically recognized in Brazil, had as main instrument the flute. After the meetings with the jazz musicians in the French capital during his trip with his group Os Batutas in 1922, he returns to Brazil playing another instrument: the sax. In the opposite direction of influences exchange, a Brazilian popular song, *Boi no Telhado*, which is attributed by José Monteiro, one of Os Batutas, impresses Darius Milhaud on a trip to Brazil, even before the passage of Os Batutas through Paris. After his return to Paris, he composed *Le Bœuf sur le toit* for a ballet-concert that Jean Cocteau was creating in 1919. In December 1921, the celebrated bar *Bœuf sur le Toit* attracts the Group of Six<sup>1</sup> (*Les Six*, in which Darius Milhaud was included), which has become a well-known jazz refuge. From the name of the dancing, the expression “*faire un bœuf*” (“to make a steak”) appeared in the French musical medium to designate a jam session.

We will try to understand in this article the transformations in the urban textual landscape of Paris from the materialities that make up this texture: the façades and signs of the dancings, the advertising posters of the balls, dancings and music halls<sup>2</sup> shows, the fashion possibly influenced by new dances and the popular songs produced in the period. To do so, we will make a brief overview of such transformations and events that mark the establishment of such musical genres in Europe in that period.

### SAMBA AND JAZZ IN EUROPE

If racial intolerance and xenophobia are currently at the center of discussions today, in France at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the French capital welcomed the foreigner from distant countries with joy and receptivity. Evelyne Cohen, regarding Paris in the 1920s, notes that:

Paris, city of culture, city of pleasures is a fertile ground where the most diverse, exotic, black and Russian fashions are spread with joy. Such fashions reveal certain receptivity to the customs, to the tastes of the foreigner, in the other hand, such fashions favor the expression of such foreigners in the Parisian world. (Cohen, 1999, p. 12)

<sup>1</sup> Berenice Menegale describes the Group of Six in the following way: “Erik Satie, Stravinsky, Picasso and other people influenced all the Parisian environment of the 1920s. Jean Cocteau – poet, artist working both in literature and in cinema, in ballet, music and theatre – used to sponsor in Paris some young composers in those “crazy years”. They were Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Germaine Tailleferre, Francis Poulenc – that a journalist named “Les Six” (The six). The name – evocative to the Russian “Five” – payed tribute and stayed for the history of music, although it does not exist really a group. The “Six” represented in France the tendency to refuse impressionism, as well as the use of elements of “music hall” and jazz (see <http://www.filarmonica.art.br/educacional/obras-e-compositores/obra-concerto-para-piano/>).

<sup>2</sup> We found in our preliminar research some posters and photos of dancings in the researched period. However, as we do not have the copywriting of such images, we will not use them here.

The announcement of the Pixinguinha and Os Batutas shows in Paris in 1922, among them Donga himself (composer of the first recorded *samba*), is an example of the reception of the Brazilian musical genre and the representations of *samba* and Brazil in the French capital:

Mr. Duke organized for this occasion a splendid party. A hot jazz directed by Mr. Bouvier and the curious orchestra “Os Batutas”, that the director of the Shéhérazade himself went to Brazil to bring to us. They will conduct the dance after the dinner. The “Semba” is going to be danced, the new dance of the moment and the fun black-step, as well as the Brazilian ciranda. And finally, at midnight: great ball! (Journal *Comoedia*, 25 mars 1922 quoted in Bastos, 2005, p. 185)

The *samba* (or *semba*) – presented as “fashion dance” – and jazz mingle in the advertisement. It reinforces exoticism (accompanied by the “curious orchestra of Os Batutas”) and the valorization of the origin of Os Batutas as a genuinely Brazilian orchestra, sought in our country personally by the director of the dancing. From his study of this passage of the group by Paris, Bastos concludes that

the campaign – there was really a campaign – to promote Os Batutas in Paris began in mid-February, very close to its debut, and lasted until the last day of June. Its main characteristic was the drawing of the musicality of the group as something unique in relation to the ethnic-national identity, built as undoubtedly Brazilian, and with respect to the orchestral formation, it is identified by a very percussive genre (the *samba*) ... Choosing *samba* as a brand, the campaign freed the group from the possibility of association with Argentine tango and its connection with the white world, which the option for the maxixe could provoke. Also, this choice emphasized the nouveau spirit of the music performed by the group. With the options for the jazz universe as a pole of contrast and rhythm-percussion as a territory of the band’s charm, the campaign incorporated its musicality in the world (no longer restricted to Latin America), home to the mighty Other, and approximated it to the African music already considered by the public (and by many musicologists already) extremely rhythmic and percussive. With Os Batutas, Duque, Guinle and Müller wanted to project the idea of a large Brazil, which was at the center of the world, and a popular song – black, yes – at the heart of all its greatness. (Bastos, 2005, p. 184)

Thus, the musicality of *samba* and other genres from the other margin of the ocean is presented in Europe as a representation of their countries and of their “exotic” cultural matrices:

symmetrically, extra-European dances arrive in old Europe after the First World War in the wake of the shows and vaudevilles presented at the music hall and by the initiative of some schools concerned with diversifying the

common repertoire of dances taught since the beginning of the century. The specific literature of the “Guides for learning to dance (1992)” expresses the desire to incorporate these new dances from far countries, putting emphasis in its exotic origin with mysterious qualifications for the neophyte: “Spanish Scottish, Brazilian maxixe, waltz hesitation, Levitte variety, Boston English, one step, tango, paso doble, java, Algerian maxixe, American boston, Triboston wavy, Boston simple, fox trot ...”. Among the identification cards of the dances that will be included in the guides from 1950, the original countries are described almost systematically, used with the intention to certify the authenticity of the exoticism, making use of simplifications of the history and of fancy interpretations. Thus, we can observe in this literature the permanence of the association of dance, to a geographical origin, to a people, to customs... (Dorier-Apprill & Apprill, 2000, pp. 12-13)

Dance guides synthesize national collective identities, simplifying diversity with reductive descriptions of the origin of each dance, valuing mainly the exoticism of countries beyond the Atlantic. We agree with Jacotot (2013), in his research on the imagery of social dances in Paris in the inter-war period, which argues that

dance, as well as music, constitutes a privileged means of expression and diffusion of the idea of nation, even if the cultural exchanges studied are in no way linked to the cultural intervention of the States of the countries that they came from. However, the issue of national identity is a central theme in the speeches of actors and observers of such transatlantic exchanges. In spite of the diversity of the contexts of creation of such musical-choreographic forms, all the genres that arrived in Europe between the 1910s and the 1930s were crystallized in a similar way and in the same period in different territories. (Jacotot, 2013, p. 163)

Thus, although such popular genres of music / dance have not yet got legitimacy in their own countries, considered by local elites as “cheap music, of no value”<sup>3</sup>, when they travel to Europe, such genres conform national identities and are presented as “the” national music of such countries.

The dance in couple becomes a sport competition in Europe in the period between wars. In addition to the traditional dances (such as the slow waltz and the Venetian waltz), the steps are codified to standardize the judging criteria in the competitions and several dances from the Americas are considered in this codification. Among them, the tango, the rumba, the *samba* (initially called the maxixe or Brazilian tango in the dance guides, is finally named *samba*), the quick step (or foxtrot) and the jive (or, later, lindy (Dorier-Apprill & Apprill, 2000), which confirms the insertion of the dances and musical genres of the Americas into the European continent, to the amazement and disgust of the self-exiled American, Brazilian and Argentine elites in Paris who had which will bend to the new Parisian fashion (Jacotot, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Paraphrase of the *samba Pra quê discutir com madame?* (composers: Haroldo Barbosa and Janet de Almeida, 1945).

In 1920s Paris, the architecture of the city was changed by the new dancings, where someone can dance listening to the sound of the exoticism of the Americas in the 1920s and by the inauguration of new music halls where such musical genres come on the scene as a great spectacle: the theater. In contrast to the traditional French balls musettes of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, where waltz or polka predominated, the recent novelty of electric light instead of gas lighting is immediately incorporated by the luminous signs of dancings, indicators of modernity of this type of place that welcomes the jazz and other music of the Americas:

the dancings – this is the strongest and bold innovation brought to our customs; it dates from 1921”, writes Maurice Sach, modest or sumptuous, they multiply. The “cafés” of Montparnasse that drain Parisian bohemian life become americanized, they add a grill ... and a dancing, like La Rotonde or la Coupole. Around them there are jazz clubs: Select, Le Dingo, Le Jockey’s ... New and luxurious establishments like Apollo, Perroquet and Shéhérazade are also built. [*the latter where Pixinguinha and Os Batutas performed when they arrived in Paris*] (Garandeau, 1998, p. 103)

The spatial identity of dancing is thus initially visual and external, the façade and the luminous become decipherable signs for the night watchers (Jacotot, 2013). In such façades, the names of establishments shine, which also differ from the names of the traditional *balls musettes*<sup>4</sup>. If such traditional dances usually made a bucolic reference to nature (*Bal du Printemps, Bal du Jardin, Bal du Arc en ciel*, etc), the new dancings make use of diverse themes such as: names with the English possessive (Camil’s Bar, Pigall’s, Zeli’s) that become a mark of Parisian taste; names of New York jazz clubs (Cotton Club, Le Savoy, etc); references to the territories from where the music comes from (*La Cabane Cubaine, Rio Rita*, etc); exotisms from the East (le Bagdad, Shéhérazade, Le Lotus); name of animals (Chauve souris, Poisson d’Or) and especially of birds (*Le Perroquet, Le Canari*) (Jacotot, 2013). The decoration of the dancings at that time is also modern for the time, exalting the exoticism, mainly of the East. We can see important transformations of the prevailing aesthetic codes: it is the beginning of the art deco style, which, by valuing the straight and sober lines, simplifies the “embroideries” of the old art nouveau façades. Industrial materials and a mixture of unusual materials, such as exotic woods, ray leather, among others (Jacotot, 2013) are used. The posters that announce the new dancings or music halls where the new dances of the Americas are presented also make use of the straight lines, inspired by the cubists and the art deco style.

“Josephine” featured on Paul Colin’s poster is Josephine Baker, an American fleeing the racial tension of the United States and adopting Paris as her new “country”, given the city’s receptivity. She states in 1929: “I am a black Frenchwoman. And I love Paris, I love Paris. Your country is the only country where you can live quietly” (Baker quoted in Cohen, 1999, p. 12).

<sup>4</sup> Popular dancings in France since the 19th century.

Thus, in addition to dancings, the music of the Americas becomes a spectacle in music halls, also publicized by the posters of Paul Colin and other artists, who become famous with their art deco posters such as Mercier, Cassandre and Carlu. All of these have in common in the production of the posters the valorization of cubism, the experimentation of new typographies and the airbrush technique, and the new machines that begin to form part of the urban landscape, thus also aligning with the futurist movement (Bachollet & Lelieur, 1992).

Fashion, especially feminine, frees itself from the corsets. “The fashion with a simplified line, imposes itself with the Charleston, with the hair a la garçonne, with the cocktails bar” (Weill, 2013, p. 27).

The dresses become straight. The marking of the waists falls and the length of the skirts and dresses diminishes, almost exposing the knees, favoring the freedom of movements and, consequently, the new dances like, for example, the Charleston with times more accelerated than the waltz or the other songs of traditional dances.

According to Garandeau (1998), with the absence of men in the period of World War I, women assume a place of protagonists of the transformations occurred in the period after the war:

the new dances rush to invade the dance halls, rooms whose public was profoundly transformed by the war. In the absence of men, women have assumed responsibilities that give them a new independence. The clothes and the feminine silhouette translate this freedom of action and movement. “La garçonne” haircut, corsets thrown out, shortened skirts, releasing the game of legs: so many details that certainly have to do with fashion dances. Well determined to forget the horrors of war, women are in fact one of the main drivers of the party mood that blows over the 1920s, a golden era of jazz both on stage, with theaters and musical comedies, as to the ball and its latest metamorphosis, the dancing. (Garandeau, 1998, p. 102)

The new soundscape prevailing in dancings is also innovative and exotic. It comes from distant Americas, passes through the capitals of Europe and arrives in Paris. As Evelyne Cohen argues,

Paris is victorious and in mourning with the end of World War I. [The 1920s] This is a decade marked by the “crazy years” (les années folles), shaking years of creative life, years of mutation and reconstruction ... Among the world’s major capitals, communications accelerate, political, economic and cultural exchanges multiply. Paris sends its “ambassadors”, its messages to the whole world. Exchanges and emulation between large cities are intense. (Cohen, 1999, p. 15)

Thus, such exchanges take place with the Americas, as we have already said, but also with other European cities, such as Lisbon. In the Portuguese capital the night clubs, (also called dancings clubs or simply clubs) created with the passage of the musicians

by the city going in direction to Paris correspond to French dancing in the decade of 20. Jazz bands put the regulars to dance the Charleston and the swing dances in sometimes mind-boggling rhythms. Newspapers (Figure 1) show a little of the new fashion.

Lisbon was a port of arrival for musicians from the Americas. Nightclubs, where new dances were danced in the 1920s, became what we could call free territories in the 1930s: places of clandestine political encounters, after the Salazar dictatorship began in 1932, places of use illegal drugs and prostitution.

So far we have outlined the transformation of various materialities of the urban textual landscape, especially in Paris. In the following, we will deal more specifically with sound material: the songs produced between the Wars that refer to Paris interpreted by Brazilian and American artists.



Figure 1: Photo reporting on Carnival at Maxim's

Source: Teixeira, 2012, p. 35

## OS BATUTAS OR “LES BATUTAS” IN PARIS

In 1919, Pixinguinha joins other popular artists and constitutes the Eight Batutas (Os Oito Batutas) that called themselves typical orchestra and that initially had a folkloric repertoire. The group's costume at the time of its creation was also in keeping with such repertoire: the musicians were always dressed in typical Northeastern *sertanejo* costumes (from the Northeast of Brazil) (Figure 2).





Figure 2: Os Oito Batutas with Northeastern costumes (photo 1920)

Source: [www.pixinguinha.com.br](http://www.pixinguinha.com.br)

They initially made presentations in popular beer houses and in the waiting rooms of middle-class cinemas in the city, and in the latter, they suffered prejudices for being black. In 1922, they were invited by Duque, a Bahian dancer eradicated in Paris, to do a season in the dancing that this one administered, the *Shéhérazade*, as we mentioned in the beginning of this work. According to Pixinguinha himself, the success in Paris resulted, when they returned to Brazil, in a greater acceptance of the group, with more invitations to play (Bessa, 2010, p.176). This trip influenced in a definitive way their career, their performance and their musicality. Bessa notes that

in Paris, Brazilians noticed that their music was consumed as exotic - and therefore, as modern. This perception was reflected, for example, in the repertoire of the group, which came to include foreign genres in their presentations, such as foxtrot, shimmy and ragtime. The change also transpired in the costume of the musicians, who permanently abandoned the Northeastern costume, adhering to the dark suit or the tuxedo. New instruments were added to the old regional one, among them the drums of João Tomás, the banjo of China and the saxophone of Pixinguinha, all coming from the jazz music in Paris. The performance was also changed, the musicians positioning themselves more relaxed and informally on the stage. (Bessa, 2010, p. 177)

In the initial research that we developed, we find some records of the passage of Les Batutas, as they were called in France, and of Pixinguinha. In the following photo (Figure 3), Pixinguinha (left) has not yet switched the flute (his main instrument until then) by the saxophone (influenced by jazz groups), João Tomás' drums still does not appear here, but the banjo in the hands of José Alves de Lima and the change in the costume of the group mentioned by Bessa (2010) appear already. These changings bring Les Batutas closer to the jazz groups that were performing in Paris.



"Les Batutas" e Duque, 1922. Em pé: Pixinguinha, José Alves de Lima, José Monteiro, Sizenando Santos "Feniano" e Duque. Sentados: China, Nelson dos Santos Alves e Donga.

Figure 3: Les Batutas and Duque in Paris (1922)  
Source: Bastos, 2017

In addition to campaigns in newspapers, we also find catalogs of gramophone companies that demonstrate that the musicians recorded on discs some songs (Figures 4 and 5).



Figure 4: General disc catalogs of Compagnie Française du Gramophone (1926 and 1933)  
Source: Photo by the author from the Phonomuseum collection (Paris)

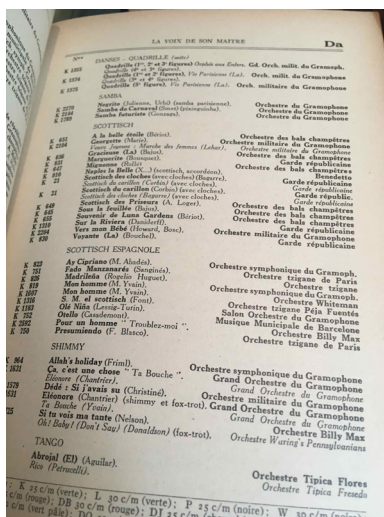


Figure 5: Catalog of the year 1926 of the Compagnie Française du Gramophone. Mention to the registration of a song of Pixinguinha (2<sup>nd</sup> line of the *samba* genre)

Source: Photo by the author from the collection of Phonomuseum (Paris)

Some historians mention the composition in French that Pixinguinha did together with Duque during the season in *Shéhérazade*. The song served as a “business card”, a presentation of the group:

Nous sommes batutas  
 Batutas, Batutas  
 Venus du Brésil  
 Ici tout droit  
 Nous sommes Batutas  
 Nous faisons tout le monde  
 Danser le *samba* (Lira Neto, 2017, p. 120)

It should be noted that in these early records of *samba* in Paris, the musical genre was presented as in Brazil in the male – *le samba*. Later, when popularizing, the *samba* in France happens to be presented in the feminine form – *la samba* – in order to have a commercial appeal, to sound thus more natural in the French language (Jacotot, 2013).

It was not by chance that Pixinguinha and Os Batutas made such a trip to Paris. Paris since the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a reference for Brazilian culture. As we presented in a previous work<sup>5</sup>, although the Portuguese court fled to Brazil because of the threat of the French invasion by Napoleon in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, as Benjamin argued, Paris was considered the cultural capital of that century. Thus, although threatened by the French, the Portuguese court had Paris as model capital to shape the new institutions created in Brazil, especially in Rio.

The Brazilian popular song, a cultural product marked by intermediality, considering its circulation through shows, discs, radio, cinema and theater from the beginning of

<sup>5</sup> Paper presented in a seminar of the research program PIMI (Patrimoine- Image- Média- Identité) in 2017. It will be published in the proceedings of the event.

the 20<sup>th</sup> century reveals traces of this French reference shaped since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Paris is presented in the songs we analyzed in the previous work mentioned, as the place of studies, fun, luxury consumption and love. However, we also observe in such work that such images are part of a complex narrative, since we perceive in the pastiches of the French language (which are more numerous than the correct use of the French, being the case of the song of Duque and Pixinguinha an exception, since it was made to circulate originally in the dancings in Paris) or in the choices of the subjects of the songs that, when knowing Paris, although they are enchanted by the city, they prefer Brazil. In these cases, despite the charm of the French capital, nationalism predominates. Thus, French culture is identified as something close to the elites and far from the popular, the “truly” Brazilian. French culture seems to serve only as a ladder to value Brazil itself. Bohemian life in Paris may be incredible, but the Brazilians of the songs prefers Leme beach in Rio de Janeiro, as in the song Paris (composition by Vermelho and Alcy Pires, 1938). Or as in the song I went to Paris (Moreira da Silva / Ribeiro Cunha, 1942), in which the songwriter will play in Paris, where he finds love, but prefers the love of Rio. Such *samba* could be inspired by the passage of Pixinguinha and the Batutas by Paris, that, although they enchanted by the city and even to arrange girlfriends there (Lira Neto, 2017), they returned after a few months to Rio de Janeiro, just like the Brazilian described in the song.

Likewise, *samba* left its mark on French culture, and just as the sambistas assimilated influences from jazz that circulated in Paris, jazz musicians and performers also assimilated elements of Brazilian culture through the *samba* that came to Paris. Several artists in France sang Brazil. In 1949, Josephine Baker herself, eradicated in France since the 1920s, records in France the *samba* What does the Bahia woman have? (*O que é que a baiana tem?*<sup>6</sup>), a popular Brazilian song.

### **MON PAYS ET PARIS**

One of the marks in the transformation of the Parisian sound landscape between the Wars and the presence of jazz in the inter-war period in France is the arrival of Josephine Baker and his jazz troupe to Paris on September 22, 1925.

Her first successful show upon arrival in Paris – the *Revue Nègre* – was to be performed only for two weeks at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées. Nevertheless, although the French already knew the jazz, the spectacle becomes a great succes among the Parisians: it becomes the main artistic event of the year of 1925 and it goes on stage for two months.

The American artist is impressed by the French freedom of customs soon after her arrival. In her show, Josephine Baker is accompanied by a jazz group and dances a crazy Charleston. She appears almost naked on the scene, which contrasts with her appearance in a dress of Paul Poiret, famous couturier of the time, arm in arm with Paul Colin, shortly after the show (Labiausse<sup>7</sup>). For the first time, the black body is advertised on

<sup>6</sup> Composed by Dorival Caymmi in 1939, originally recorded by Carmem Miranda in the same year.

<sup>7</sup> See [http://migrateurs-transatlantique.pagesperso-orange.fr/josephine\\_baker.htm](http://migrateurs-transatlantique.pagesperso-orange.fr/josephine_baker.htm)

stage and off stage as a model of beauty. Black music, in its turn, is valued as something modern.

This show, which propels Josephine Baker to success, also makes the artist Paul Colin a celebrity, who knew how to put on his poster the modernity of the New York troupe that accompanies Baker. The show marks the beginning of the “*folie noire*”, made of jazz, Charleston and various eccentricities that invaded Paris and will lead numerous American black artists to settle in France to escape the racial tensions of the United States. (Bachollet & Lelieur, 1992, p. 136)

The so-called “*folie noire*” takes over the new dance venues of the time – the dancings – and becomes a regular part of music halls, through theaters. Josephine Baker becomes a symbol of women liberation.

With her distinctly modern attitudes, she has helped to accelerate this [women] revolution by carrying it as a symbol. In Paris in the 1920s, Josephine’s name is synonymous with freedom. With her small breasts, her bare haunches, her black haircut short and glued with gum, Josephine embodied a great number of trends, tastes, and aspirations of the day. She was no longer a person, but a concept and became the typical “*garçonne*” that of Victor Margueritte’s celebrated novel. (Labiausse<sup>8</sup>)

Josephine goes on a tour to Brussels and Berlin, where she reaches great success among the Germans. She returns to Paris where she performs at the Folies Bergère and creates a dancing where she will dance after the nights of spectacle. Montparnasse becomes a neighborhood of Paris that houses French and American intellectuals, artists and countless dancings where the songs of the Americas are heard and danced. From the impact of her presentations, she becomes the muse of *avant-garde* artists, famous dancers. As lists Labiausse:

She captivates the masters of the time: the painter Foujita begs her to pose for him. She poses for Picasso, Van Dongen and Horst, naked for Dunand and Man Ray photographs her. The cubist Henri Laurens represents her dancing the Charleston. In 1926, Alexander Calder caricatures her in iron wires, as well as several sculptures. Josephine’s most celebrated portrait is a nude by Jean-Gabriel Domergue: she sits forward, her lips moist and a white flower in her hair. This picture, which was first exhibited at the Grand Palais in Paris, was reproduced in postcards. The writers paid homage. Francis Scott Fitzgerald mentions it in one of his novels, *Return to Babylon*; (...) Maurice Sachs evokes Josephine in his work *In the times of the Boeuf sur le Toit*, which tells the author’s mundane life in the form of a diary: “Charleston: It was Josephine Baker who pitched with the blacks in the music hall of the Champs Élysées. *Cat’s Wisker*. This universal

<sup>8</sup> See [http://migrateurs-transatlantique.pagesperso-orange.fr/josephine\\_baker.htm](http://migrateurs-transatlantique.pagesperso-orange.fr/josephine_baker.htm)

Charleston replaced the blues and the shimmy. “Colette calls her “the most beautiful panther” and Erich Maria Remarque refers to Josephine as “bringing an air of the jungle, of elemental strength and beauty to the tired stages of the civilization of the West.” And it was Josephine who inspired Paul Morand to write his novel *Black Magic*. Morand saw Josephine as a dance machine, fueled by primitive energy. It corresponded to his conception of the tireless savage, full of joy, whose spirit was devoid of complications. The most beautiful tribute to *Revue Nègre* and to Josephine in Paris in the Foolish Years was performed by Paul Colin who appropriates the dancers to produce a series of drawings where he played with the strength and dynamism of colors. 45 lithographs were collected in an album entitled *Black Tumult* and edited in 1927. (Labiause<sup>9</sup>)

In our preliminary research, we find some of the old addresses of such establishments frequented by artists and anonymous night owls in Montparnasse. We made a walk between them (to make photographic records of the facades of the addresses that housed the dancings), which confirms the proximity between the dancings, which allowed the night watchers to change of establishment to listen to different songs throughout the night, as described by some researchers of the period (Jacotot, 2013).

In 1930, Josephine records one of his successes well known until today, even after his death in 1975: *J'ai deux amours*<sup>10</sup>.

J'ai deux amours  
Mon pays et Paris  
Par eux toujours  
Mon coeur est ravi  
Ma savane est belle  
Mais à quoi bon le nier  
Ce qui m'ensorcelle  
C'est Paris Paris tout entier  
Le voir un jour  
C'est mon rêve joli  
J'ai deux amours  
Mon pays et Paris.

Although not composed by Baker, the song's lyrics seem autobiographical. The subject of the song says that she has two loves “my country and Paris”. This love is shared between the American origin of the artist as well her African roots – since the lyrics speak of “savannas”, a recurring image in representations of the African continent – and her new “country” – the French capital. As the words say, the savannah of her country is beautiful, but what enchants her is Paris.

This dubiety is also present in the performance of the voice versus the lyrics of the song. The artist sings in correct French, however, also carries in its performance

<sup>9</sup> See [http://migrateurs-transatlantique.pagesperso-orange.fr/josephine\\_baker.htm](http://migrateurs-transatlantique.pagesperso-orange.fr/josephine_baker.htm)

<sup>10</sup> “J'ai deux amours” by Joséphine Baker, composed by Géo Koger, H. Varna and Vincent Scotto -1930)

the marks of its origin: the American accent. It is different from what happens with the Brazilian songs of the time that have Paris as reference. As we mentioned, most of the Brazilian songwriters who composed songs referring to Paris did so in Portuguese and not in the French language. French is used in the form of pastiche in the lyrics and in the pronunciation of the interpreters, who make no effort in the direction of a correct pronunciation of the language. In addition, although Paris is considered a reference for the culture in the world, the Brazilians of the songs, in general, prefer Brazil and especially the city of Rio de Janeiro. Thus, Paris is charming, but the “*sambista*” prefers the love of Rio, unlike Josephine Baker who chose France as home and only returned to his country of origin to make occasional shows.

Although she recorded several songs whose musicality approaches the tradition of the *chanson française* (like other versions of *J'ai deux amours*), what made the arrival of Baker a remarkable event in the cultural life of the city was its devilish performance when dancing the Charleston to the sound of jazz; their costumes (and sometimes the lack of them); her “adoption” by the *avant-garde* artists and intellectuals of the time, enchanted by the beauty and exoticism of the black bodies and by the sonority of the songs of origin beyond the sea, whose rhythmic markings called for the involvement of the body in the performances.

#### AS A CONCLUSION: FUTURE ISSUES AND PATHWAYS

The panorama of the arrival of *samba* and jazz in Europe and the transformations of European textual landscapes in the inter-war period motivated us, in the centennial year of the first record of *samba* and the first record of jazz, to propose a postdoctoral research whose main objective is to understand the synthesis representations of Brazil and the USA in Europe through jazz, *samba* and dances originating from these musical genres. We tried to observe the relations between the music and transformations that occurred in the urban textual landscape in the inter-war period. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Brazilian music and American music were present in Paris, the cultural capital of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as Walter Benjamin argued. As we noted in this text, the French capital is also present in the songs sung by Brazilians and Americans.

Pires (2014) argues that, “the city understood as a stage that lends itself to the parade of the most visible transformations operated in the landscape by modernity, we might interrogate its diverse representations, or, in other words, the way Paris, London, Naples or New York, become places that are frequently revisited in our imaginary” (Pires, 2014, p. 277).

Thus, the preliminary results of the research presented here suggest an imbrication between the transformations in the textual urban landscape of Paris and the arrival of the new music of the Americas, including in this landscape, the posters, the façades of the establishments, the fashion and the costumes of the artists and the musicality of these related to their countries of origin. We agree with La Rocca (2010) who seeks to understand cities from a “sociological and cultural climatology” that observes in this way, “social temperature”, “cultural winds”, “symbolic precipitations”, “aesthetic clouds” cities

at certain times. According to this view, “therefore, time contracts in space, thus giving a new meaning, a new accentuation of spatiality. Such spatiality could be called ‘imaginal’, and it contributes to the accentuation of the present” (La Rocca, 2010, p. 161).

In the next stage of the research, we intend to map the places that received the music from the Americas, searching the original locations in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as making photos of them in order to understand the traces of that time spent in the present space of the city. But even before we develop this cartography, the initial findings of the research we present here raise some questions to be answered throughout the development of the project: how would these representations that synthesize supposed collective identities that initially are not accepted even in their countries themselves? Which images of Brazil and the United States do these representations evoke? How deep the transformations in the urban textual landscape of Paris from the new French dancing and music halls are relate to the new music of the Americas? What are the traces of this textual landscape of the period between wars in contemporary urban landscape in Paris?

In addition to answer these questions, the project also points to future researches, such as understanding how musicians are received when they return to their countries of origin, observing the evidences of the recognition achieved in Europe as a form of legitimation of such genres, initially rejected in their own countries.

Nowadays, in which fundamentalism, xenophobia and racism are discussed all over the world, at a time when countries like Brazil are witnessing a political and social upheaval in direction to the right accompanied by a growing intolerance of the other, we consider this research relevant to understand the processes affirmation of black minorities and consolidation of musical genres of black origin as conformers of national identities in a distant European country. In other words, we sought to understand those “cultural winds” that originated in the Americas, which blew upon the European continent in the inter-war period and generated significant “symbolic precipitations” today in the present time.

Translation: Graziela Mello Vianna. Revised by Cristiana Maria Correia de Sousa Renault Baêta

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