

Gadismo

Farewell to Abjection in Brazilian Cultural Production

Ana Lessa

Este artigo procura analisar e contextualizar o conceito de Gadismo fazendo uso de alguns exemplos de músicas brasileiras, principalmente durante o período da ditadura militar no Brasil (1964–1985). Para tanto utilizaremos canções que confirmam e outra que vai de encontro a este conceito como que para confirmá-lo. Portanto, procuramos enfatizar a idéia de que esse Gadismo nas artes possui uma relação direta com a música brasileira como uma maneira de representação da massa oprimida, e também como símbolo de uma nação que viveu momentos tumultuados por extremos de censura, tortura, protesto e exílio, e vive hoje novamente momentos de protestos e violência.

Long ago, ever since we sell or suffrages
To none, it has done with cares; for it, which once gave
Authority, fasces, legions, all things, now itself
Refrains, and anxious only wishes for two things,
Bread and the Circenses. (Juvenal, *Satire* 10.77–81)
(Madan 13)

As controversial and polemic as Juvenal's *Satire's* passage above can be, his coined expression *panem et circenses* is time-resistant and continues to be one of those statements which have served many generations and societies as an allegory of the decadent late Roman classical period model. At that time, "food doles and public entertainment were still the chief means of currying favor with the people," when the "Roman people were held in check by two things especially, *annona et spectaculis*" (Sanford 18). Whichever meaning, or translation, one takes into consideration the expression is always going to lead to the suggestion of a mundane and relaxed approach to life, almost

orgiastic and irresponsible, where well-fed and entertained people are too appeased and lethargic to acknowledge, and rebel against the government which has continuously provided them with those two “essentials,” food and entertainment, or bread and circuses. In that setting people would overlook, senselessly, blissfully, and sometimes even supportively, any negative changes of approach and any wrong-doings of its rulers. Within the secular configuration of this spontaneous cession of civil rights, the formal provision of order, social services, education, and citizenship can be taken, giving space for leaders and politicians who make use of this strategy to manipulate the masses, and in doing so to abuse the power entrusted to them. Another way of spelling Juvenal’s bread could have been “written as *pan*, *pana*, or even *pannum* more than as *panem*” (Sanford 19), which would have suggested a godly meaning, as *pan* would relate to the myth of Pan, the Greek god of music or nature, further reinforcing the creation of the myth of a “happy people,” fulfilled by free entertainment and free food as a way of control.

Many other writers after Juvenal made use of the iconic and ironic expression. From the first contemporary use of its English version in the title of Helen Parry Eden’s *Bread and Circuses* (1914); to a small mention in Rudyard Kipling’s *Debts and Credits* (1926); or even the title of a *Star Trek* episode (1968); the one work which would eternalize the phrase was Aldous Huxley’s 1958 *Brave New World Revisited* when referring to one of the author’s creations (*soma*) in his dystopian 1932 *Brave New World*. According to Huxley, the masses following without thinking or questioning were given one single type of *panem* (never to be confused with bread): *soma*. This hallucinogenic substance had the power of making its users to “give no trouble to their superiors” (*Revisited* 19), and it was used as “a political institution . . . [and] one of the most powerful instruments of the rule of the dictator’s armory” (104). The efficacy of the drug is exemplified by Huxley through the description of one of his characters, Benito Hoover, who is described, with a certain hint of irony, as a model of behavior for being “notoriously good-natured. People said of him that he could have got through life without ever touching *soma*. The malice and bad tempers from which other people had to take holidays never afflicted him. Reality for Benito was always sunny” (*Brave* 57). Following the same principle of the Romans’ *panem et circenses*, in Huxley’s world the common vision of reality was distorted and contrived by the provision of not only *soma*, but also of *circenses*, as in the passage: “[The] non-stop distractions of the most fascinating nature (the feelies, orgy-porgy, centrifugal bumblepuppy) . . . [were] deliberately used as instruments of policy, for the purpose of preventing people from paying too much attention to the realities of the social and political situation” (*Revisited* 51).

In the case of Brazilian society, music has directly addressed the notion of *panem et circenses*, having further criticized and mocked its use by the ruling

powers, during the period of the recent military dictatorship (1964–1985), for their way of dehumanizing the people. In the album, *Tropicália ou Panis et Circencis* (1968), considered by Décio Pignatari as a “delicious *avant-garde* provincialism” (Veloso 279), the band Os Mutantes recorded the song “Panis et Circencis,” by Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil, which portrays the people, in this case a family, as simple motionless observers, in contrast to the narrator’s efforts to change the external status quo of the system (lines 1–13).

- 1 Eu quis cantar minha canção iluminada de sol
- 2 Soltei os panos sobre os mastros no ar
- 3 Soltei os tigres e os leões nos quintais
- 4 Mas as pessoas na sala de jantar
- 5 São ocupadas em nascer e morrer
- 6 Mandei fazer de puro aço luminoso um punhal
- 7 Para matar o meu amor e matei
- 8 Às cinco horas na avenida central
- 9 Mas as pessoas da sala de jantar
- 10 São ocupadas em nascer e morrer
- 11 Mandei plantar folhas de sonhos no jardim do solar
- 12 As folhas sabem procurar pelo sol
- 13 E as raízes procurar, procurar
- 14 Mas as pessoas da sala de jantar
- 15 Essas pessoas da sala de jantar
- 16 São as pessoas da sala de jantar
- 17 Mas as pessoas da sala de jantar
- 18 São ocupadas em nascer e morrer . . .

Through the repetition of words and the crescendo of the music, we are drawn into the desperation of the first-person narrator’s voice in recognizing that these people, who could be eating or waiting to be fed their “bread” (*na sala de jantar*), do not live a life of knowledge of what is surrounding them; their only role in life is to give birth and to die (line 18), perpetuating a vicious circle of inertia and apathy where there is no real life between birth and death. The impassivity of the scene leads us to imagine other creatures whose role is nothing more than being born, serving blindly and eventually giving their lives away: cattle.

When considering that since the advent of the military dictatorship, and its pledge to modernize the country, Brazil has turned its agrarian roots into an industrial success, be it with its large-scale production of airplanes, sugar cane for ethanol, meat and soya beans, and large exports of mineral resources, we cannot but acknowledge that this advance was made with the use

of manpower, which in most societies are a faceless and characterless crowd of working class “citizens,” treated as “the masses,” comparable to a herd. Within the arts, the animalization of this herd will carry different connotations and implications, either positive or negative depending on the animal’s “personality” and on the take of the creator of the piece we are analyzing.

Described by Euclides da Cunha in *Os sertões: Companhia de Canudos* in the figure of a centaur herding the cows, these people can be portrayed in a good light as they would become an extension of their surroundings, as part of nature itself without any detachment, as if they were one, which allows them to survive the harsh conditions of the Northeast of Brazil and its social, economical and environmental challenges:

O sertanejo é, antes de tudo, um forte. . . .

A sua aparência, entretanto, ao primeiro lance de vista, revela o contrário. Falta-lhe a plástica impecável, o desempenho, a estrutura correctíssima das organizações atléticas. . . .

É o homem permanentemente fadigado . . .

Entretanto, toda esta aparência de cansaço ilude . . .

Não há contê-lo, então, no ímpeto . . . nada lhe impede encaixar o *garrote* desgarrado, porque *por onde passa o boi passa o vaqueiro com o seu cavalo* . . .

Colado ao dorso deste, confundindo-se com ele, graças à pressão dos jarretes firmes, realiza a criação bizarra de um centauro bronco . . . (Cunha 207–208)

On the other hand, many writers also compare humans to animals when they need to ridicule, or criticize the behavior and procedures of the former in relation to the latter. One of the best examples that come to mind is George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* (1945), a dystopian parody of the Russian Revolution (1917), where the animals take over a farm from the humans whilst demonstrating human traits. Amongst the many animals portrayed in the book, the most active ones are the pigs who become the leaders of the once Manor Farm. The ones that are least mentioned are the cows, which will mainly appear to give milk (to be milked) in a submissive manner, first to man and then to other animals (representing the sweat and blood of the human workers).

With the figure of these cows in mind, we can assume that the animalization of man can be appropriated in a generally straightforward negative, and perhaps even necessary, way to explain some cultural and social aspects when it comes to the representation of either the man of the *sertão*, or the working class in Brazilian society, as seen through *Gadismo*.¹ This concept, which explores or portrays a certain attitude from society, implies that the people of a certain cultural and socio-economic background are perceived as being treated or behaving like *gado* (cattle). Adding the suffix *-ismo* to the word *gado* helps us to denote “a system, principle, or ideological movement . . . a state or quality . . . a basis of prejudice or discrimination” (Pearsall

and Trumble 746), through which lenses those people are observed and used as a collective metaphor for social tissue being analysed. However, even if ending on an *-ismo*, Gadismo is not to be confused with either Cattleism or Cowism.

According to the James Walter Thompson advertising company's *A Primer of Capitalism* (1), Cattleism refers to the cow as "the mother of capitalism, a commodity, an asset, carrying the recognition of its value status, which contrasts with the working class in Gadismo. In fact, Cattleism acknowledges that 'cattle' and 'capitalism' are the same word. Capital comes from 'head.' Capitalism is a count of heads of cattle," and for that reason, "capitalism might almost be called cattleism." This Cattleism could have been a direct reflection on the *Parable of the Isms* and its "two cows," which are used as a metaphor for capital and property. In Cowism, as envisaged by Dr. Sahadeva Dasa, what is observed is a process of appraisal of the sacredness of the cow—comparable to Hinduism worship—as a means for a "natural economics" in opposition to global economics and capitalism, whereby the cow is used as a spiritual connection to all other animals, including human beings. Dr. Sahavega Dasa argues that a millennial and sustainable system "was [once] based on land, domesticated animals and other gifts of nature. This was a completely localized, decentralized, self-sufficient and nature dependent model, based on the concepts of 'plain living and high thinking'" (vii–viii), and believes that this is the only way for recovering humanity and the environment.

Thus, Gadismo is in total contrast to both Cattleism and Cowism in the sense that in the former people would never be treated as either an asset or a spiritual connector, instead they would be cowed (either by choice or lack of it) by obeying a leader (be it a farmer or a political individual or institution), following the crowd without questioning (in an orderly queue waiting for their turn);² with their heads down without rebelling or stepping out of line. As cattle endure the harshness of their environment, being used by men from birth (milk) to death (meat/leather), in Gadismo man is used by man *between* birth and death throughout their working age period, as in the old adage "being milked by the system," for a defined purpose without much rights or choices. This "usage" is generally related to long working hours, badly paid and/or inferior and/or manual work (which could also imply an antagonist relation to intellectual power), and sometimes even slave work. Such a condition generates a perpetual chain of manipulation, alienation, conformism, exploitation, and lack of social belonging and commitment. These people are expected to keep obediently quiet and to follow their leader; docilely serving and waiting for their rewards in the form of "food" (*panem*) and "entertainment" (*circenses*) which should be provided by the "farmer" (bosses and/or political leaders). These rewards are then used to keep control of this "contented mass" with the aim of preventing a stampede (rebellion),

which would be dangerous and unprofitable for the power holders. In this manner, man is metamorphosed, and animalized into cattle.

In the case of Brazilian society, history, and art, we can point towards more *circenses* than *panem* so as to make the connection between *panem et circenses* and Gadismo evident. The *circenses* are evident in the promotion of free/inexpensive mass entertainment in the name of the dissemination and popularization of cultural values such as carnival, football, large-scale public artistic performances, which only continues to perpetuate the stereotype of Brazil as a “happy nation,” the land of football, samba and beaches.

As a way of reversing this romanticized stereotype of Brazil as paradise, many artists have manifested an opposite perspective through their work. This manifestation will generally take a voyeuristic point of view, as the artist voices the anguish of its subject whilst not actually belonging to its social and/or cultural background. Their discourse is loaded with an *etic* approach; they are looking at this world from the spectators’, the informants’ view, hence *etic* “is the view of the anthropologist or social scientist” (Srivastava, 2005:55).

Turning to music I will examine Zé Ramalho’s portrayal of the Brazilian people through the social criticism of his 1979³ song, “Admirável gado novo,”⁴ an indisputable tribute to Huxley’s work.

- 1 Ooooooooooh! Oooi!
- 2 Vocês que fazem parte dessa massa
- 3 Que passa nos projetos do futuro
- 4 É duro tanto ter que caminhar
- 5 E dar muito mais do que receber
- 6 E ter que demonstrar sua coragem
- 7 À margem do que possa parecer
- 8 E ver que toda essa engrenagem
- 9 Já sente a ferrugem lhe comer

Ramalho acts as an observer of these people whilst directly addressing “them” (line 2), in a critical and at the same time sympathetic way, as he implies that “they” have to gain recognition of themselves as being “part of this mass” of thousands of working-class people who are part of a future⁵ that never comes, because they just “walk through the projects” (line 3) of a future without being part of it, only giving (their labor and trust), and rarely receiving anything in return (line 5). Ramalho could also be commenting on the long walks to reach work in the countryside, or the commute to work in packed public transportation in cities, which reinforces the strength of these people who are almost invisible (lines 6 and 7), as an allusion to the Marxist notion of what the Capitalist system does to society in general: keeping a proportionate relation between the increase of profit and the means of

production, whilst degrading the lives of its workers. An image of Charles Chaplin's *Modern Times* (1936) comes to mind, as in the film he criticizes industrialization and its effects on the social and working conditions after the "Great Depression" of the 1930s, by portraying life as the struggle of mankind to adapt and comply with the arrival of such technological advancement and its unreasonable demands. In one scene, the worker rebels against the system and leaves the plant. Chaplin plays a character who represents most of the working class around the world: people living, sometimes, on the margins of society but still strong enough to survive what is said to be, in Ramalho's lyrics, a "rusting" system, which the military dictatorship in Brazil at that time was becoming a good example of, for suffering from "corrosion" (lines 8 to 9), whilst still, through impunity and corruption, perpetuating social inequality.

- 10 Êeeeeh! Oh! Oh!
 11 Vida de gado
 12 Povo marcado
 13 Êh! Povo feliz

The people in the song are portrayed as a "marked people/[but] happy people" (line 12 and 13), which efficiently translates the stereotype of the Brazilian uplifted spirit of dealing with the struggles of daily life, by picturing them as "marked" by different experiences and labels depending on where they come from (geographically speaking), which layer of society they belong to, which level of education they hold, and what opportunities they have been given, but still content with their fate.

- 20 Demoram-se na beira da estrada
 21 E passam a contar o que sobrou

However, without any perspective of future or path to follow they just count the little that "was left" (line 21) for them on the margins of society (line 20), whilst still hoping for a miracle, represented by the end of the dictatorship (lines 27 and 28).

- 27 Esperam nova possibilidade
 28 De verem esse mundo se acabar
 29 A Arca de Noé, o dirigível
 30 Não voam nem se pode flutuar

It is worth noticing that the sounds of the refrain remind us of the chanting of a *vaqueiro* when herding the cattle (lines 1 and 10), which sends us forward to the end of the song when Ramalho mentions Noah's Ark, with its many pairs of animals and its need of a deluge; and the airship with its imminent possibility of being consumed by fire, with no animals but only humans

onboard (line 29). Ramalho puts both vessels together as worthless (line 30), an allusion to the fact that they are both unmanageable, hence, cannot solve the problem of escaping from this failed system. Ramalho's admiration, and/or pity, for this people is not unique though, and many other artists will use a *gadista* way of referring to the masses.

Widely portrayed in Brazilian literature and music as representing the plight of the Brazilian working class as a whole, the *sertanejos* or *nordestinos* are considered to either endure the difficulties of the *sertão* and its *caatinga*, or to leave the region behind in the hope of a better life in the big cities, most of the time without much success. Many Brazilian songwriters have helped to immortalize this role since the 60s, but for the scope of this article, our interest lies in one in particular, Geraldo Vandré.

Vandré, who, according to Victoria Langland, had reasons to fear for his own life and fled Brazil into exile (5), wouldn't be stopped by the military from establishing his influence in Brazilian music through many iconic songs; one of his most popular, which still resonates within Brazilian culture nowadays, is "Disparada." With music by Théo Barros, it was interpreted for the first time by Jair Rodrigues during the 1966⁶ Brazilian Popular Music Festival broadcast by TV Record, and it provoked protests in the audience—who considered "Disparada" of superior quality—when it tied for 1st place with Chico Buarque's song "A banda" at the festival's final night.

As "Disparada" has the power to evoke "the rhetoric of protest song [which] frequently operated on a 'mythological level' that thwarted human agency by constantly deferring action in the here and now for an imaginary day of redemption" (Dunn 63), it incited the public to participate, to take the journey following the life and changes of a *sertanejo* who had hypothetically climbed the hierarchy of the farm to rise above other workers as a herdsman, and to find himself blinded by his own power, and then aware of his own people's plight. This is an ingenious commentary on the exploitation of the working class through its characterization as "cattle." However, within a different reading of the song, one could see the represented image of a soldier who finds himself powerful enough to arrest and torture people (as the military did during the dictatorship), but then turns himself against the Army in order to denounce the violent treatment of Brazilian citizens who opposed the system. Consequently, the song acknowledges this officer's disillusion in the face of the suffering of his own citizen fellows (who possibly come from the same humble social and economic background as himself) at the hands of officers.

The title itself, "Disparada" (*estouro da boiada*, *dispersão*, or stampede), resonates a loaded meaning in the song, charging on the domination of man by man, and the repercussion of their release from the hypothetical role of "cattle." Consequently, this song fits in with the concept of Gadismo for its

treatment of the subaltern as it beckons “an epiphany of social and political consciousness” (Dunn 63), which is probably the reason why it is one of the most famous songs from the dictatorial period in Brazil. Moreover, one must consider its great popular appeal through its popular culture rhythms and the physical and emotional thrill it provokes on the listeners through its changes of tone and mood, and through its arrangement and Jair Rodrigues’s performance.

- 1 Prepare o seu coração prás coisas que eu vou contar
- 2 Eu venho lá do sertão, eu venho lá do sertão
- 3 Eu venho lá do sertão e posso não lhe agradar
- 4 Aprendi a dizer não, ver a morte sem chorar
- 5 E a morte, o destino, tudo, a morte e o destino, tudo
- 6 Estava fora de lugar, eu vivo prá consertar

With a subtle and mellow beginning the listeners are introduced to a strong statement, a warning and an announcement, to brace themselves, as if the message they are about to listen to is too heavy to bear (line 1). This introduction within the, at the time, unpopular genre of *sertanejo* music, with its acoustic guitar present throughout the song, signals a reiteration of the intention of the composer. In lines 2 and 3, the first-person narrator acknowledges and warns, with plenty of repetition, that being from the *sertão* can be a burden, and that some people can be displeased by his upbringing (line 3). From the perspective of a herdsman his background is the literal countryside; from that of a young soldier (or police/army officer) it could be a *favela*, the place where many of these officers actually come from, or where the underprivileged people from the countryside inevitably end up when they move to the big cities seeking better life conditions. Coming from such background, either social or geographical, could be seen by some people as derogatory and incriminating, either because they are prejudiced or lack interest or knowledge about the populace of either dwelling. Declaring himself as being from a “rough” background, the narrator had to learn how to say “no” to himself (and to others) regarding many aspects of life, including the omnipresence of death. He cannot waste energy by crying on account of death (line 4), thus he demonstrates an insensitivity to it. In spite of his somber perspective, he is certain that he can change his fate and also fix things around him (line 5 and 6).

- 7 Na boiada já fui boi, mas um dia me montei
- 8 Não por um motivo meu, ou de quem comigo houvesse
- 9 Que qualquer querer tivesse, porém por necessidade
- 10 Do dono de uma boiada cujo vaqueiro morreu

At the beginning of the stanza above (lines 7 to 10), the unison of voices, as in a choir, gives the impression that this man is not alone; he could be multiplied by many sharing his condition, and is one amongst a crowd, a herd or a battalion (line 7). In the original footage of the performance at the 1966 music festival, we can notice a very excited audience, and amidst them officers in their uniforms watching out for any disturbance. But that uprising never comes because the crowd is more interested in the message which is not being told: one of rebellion and self-awareness, when the herdsman or the soldier finds his way out of subjugation, when this man's fate changes as he rises up from the herd by getting promoted (line 7). However, it is not the case that he, or any of the others, had the will to change his fate; on the contrary it was chance that gave him the opportunity to become a *patrão* by the order of the "owner of the herd," or his superior in chief, in order to replace the previous man in charge who had died, possibly killed. Here we contemplate a contradictory inertia, the impossibility of change, through the fact that although he has achieved success for having tamed the beast (going from bull to horse to human, which brings back the imagery of the centaur suggested by da Cunha), he did not achieve it through his own efforts, but rather by pure luck (lines 8 to 10).

However, in the next stanza it becomes clear that his lack of will or self-confidence did not stop him from enjoying his new post, since from the previous stanza to the next (lines 10 to 11) we experience a change in tone, reinforced by the music, when a donkey's jaw⁷ is used to suggest the sound of a whip, which is extremely effective for signaling the ascendancy and power of our "hero" who is now having to face the consequences of his rising.

- 11 Boiadeiro muito tempo, laço firme e braço forte
- 12 Muito gado, muita gente, pela vida segurei
- 13 Seguia como num sonho, e boiadeiro era um rei
- 14 Mas o mundo foi rodando nas patas do meu cavalo
- 15 E nos sonhos que fui sonhando, as visões se clareando
- 16 As visões se clareando, até que um dia acordei

The whipping sound also works as a reminder of the depth of the pain caused by his new mentality and demeanor, as he tells us that for a long time his situation was one of control through his "firm lasso" and his "strong arm" (line 11), as if with the whip of a torturer, dominating as much his people as he has dominated the cattle, who carry a strong likeness to each other (line 12). One could argue here that being a young officer, and maybe naïve about the deepest social and political effects of a dictatorship, this soldier—who is obliged to serve in the army—now enjoys the power granted to him. He describes the feeling of being in control as a dream coming true, and

his becoming the most powerful of all men, comparable to becoming a king (line 13). Even though these strong feelings are enjoyable, after much time in power (line 14), this man starts to understand the real world surrounding him, and as if the blindfold of a dream had been taken off his eyes (lines 14 to 16) he “wakes up.”

- 17 Então não pude seguir valente em lugar tenente
 18 E dono de gado e gente, porque gado a gente marca
 19 Tange, ferra, engorda e mata, mas com gente é diferente

With his eyes now wide open, there are no more excuses to continue his wrongdoings as a foreman of people and/or cattle. It is noticeable here the use of the expression “em lugar tenente” (line 17), which brings to light the presence of a military term, but in the voice of a civilian, since “*tenente*” could refer not exclusively to the rank of this man, lieutenant (now in command replacing someone else), but also to *tenência* (Ferreira 667) as the lieutenant general’s workplace which would show his high position of power; or from the Brazilian popular use of the word, meaning to be firm, to act with vigor, to observe a habit. It is then from this pedestal position that he realizes that his people should not be treated like cattle. These people should not be marked, branded, tortured, and killed as if they were animals (lines 18 and 19). The rebellious tone of this song’s claim can be taken as one of the main reasons why it became, at that point, the “mais vigorosa canção de protesto surgida até então, um verdadeiro cântico revolucionário” (Severiano and de Mello 9) in Brazilian popular music.

- 20 Se você não concordar não posso me desculpar
 21 Não canto prá enganar, vou pegar minha viola
 22 Vou deixar você de lado, vou cantar noutro lugar

As if predicting that many would oppose his ideas, message and tone (line 20), this man reassures us that he is not trying to deceive anybody with witness accounts (line 21). However, if the listeners do not agree with him, nothing is going to change his mind, since he is not going to stop spreading the word about what is happening to this “kingdom” or its people. His message of redemption is too precious to be wasted on those of little faith, hence he is not going to waste any time, he will just go on to sing it to another crowd, therefore leaving behind those listeners who do not want to take notice or agree with his message (lines 22).

- 23 Na boiada já fui boi, boiadeiro já fui rei
 24 Não por mim nem por ninguém, que junto comigo houvesse

- 25 Que quisesse ou que pudesse, por qualquer coisa de seu
 26 Por qualquer coisa de seu querer ir mais longe que eu
 27 Mas o mundo foi rodando nas patas do meu cavalo
 28 E já que um dia montei agora sou cavaleiro
 29 Laço firme e braço forte num reino que não tem rei

This man goes from being just one person amongst the crowd to become the ruler of his own kingdom, the leader of his life (line 23), even though he recognizes that this was the result of mere chance, as it was not him, or any of his people, who did anything purposeful in order to change things around them (lines 24 to 26). The acknowledged truth from lines 17 to 19 has freed him, making him an independent rider (line 28), and also enabling him to finally recognize the existence of a kingdom which, from then on, would have no leader who could control him any more (line 29), as he has become his own master in a “kingless kingdom.”

In “Disparada,” a disparate or anomalous circumstance occurs when a man rises above his own condition and comes to understand his role so as to give others the recognition of their situation and break through a vicious circle of domination and control. Following the analysis proposed by Josh Kun, “Disparada” could be seen as a powerful example of an *audiotopia*, in which music takes us into

the possible, to help us remap the world we live in now—and because of its uncanny ability to absorb and meld heterogeneous national, cultural, and historical styles and traditions across space and within place, the possibility of the audiotopia makes sense: sonic spaces of effective utopian longings where several sites normally deemed incompatible are brought together, not only in the space of a particular piece of music itself, but in the production of social space and the mapping of geographical space that music makes possible as well. (23)

As such, even if accepting the end of line 29 as meaning a country that has been ruled by so many leaders from the military, but is now ruled by no “one” real “king” (which would lead to dismay and chaos), the song serves the purpose of creating a community not only within the imagination of political protest or concern for social issues, but also by effectively stressing that the geographical (public) space puts ideologies, hopes and dreams in one specific place (country), thus adding a sense of utopia to it, i.e., *audiotopia*. Kun continues his argument underlining the “dual function” of reading and listening for *audiotopias*, that is, through an analysis of the music and lyrics of a song in order

to focus on the space of music itself and the different spaces and identities it juxtaposes within itself, and to focus on the social spaces, geographies,

and identities that music can enable, reflect, and prophecy. In both cases, the audiotopia is a musical space of difference, where contradictions and conflicts do not cancel each other out but coexist and live through each other. Thus, in a sense, audiotopias can also be understood as identificatory “contact zones,” in that they are both sonic and social spaces where disparate identity-formations, cultures, and geographies historically kept and mapped separately are allowed to interact with each other as well as enter into relationships whose consequences for cultural identification are never predetermined. (23)

“Disparada,” as an example of audiotopia, can be seen as a moment, a space, or place, where the two worlds of herdsman and soldier meet, coexist, without excluding each other; where cattle and people become one in order to emphasize the treatment and the misconduct of a society dominated and blinded by a military dictatorship. This type of undemocratic system has led its artists into the intricate world of double-meaning and almost double entendre, as we have seen here, where the “lyrics had to be free of political content or heavily coded . . . [into] metaphoric verses to voice their discontent” (McGowan and Pessanha 185), to avoid censorship, and try to guarantee a voice, and a certain degree of citizenship and belonging to those deprived of it.

These songs, and many other throughout the dictatorial period and beyond, thus appropriate and use the metaphor of the cattle with the effect of generating a *gadista* perspective, where the character of the follower, ignorant or blind (by choice or condition), is used in order to create an audiotopian world of freedom of choice and open-eyedness making an inestimable call for action against the social order and powers of the status quo of the dystopian censorship of the period.

Notes

1. Gadismo is a neologism developed as a cultural/social concept by the author throughout her teaching of Brazilian Cultural Studies at the University of Nottingham from 2005 to 2011.

2. It is interesting to notice that whilst the human practice of queuing has been mocked by George Mikes in his *How to be an Alien* (1946) as a national British passion, Sir Winston Churchill coined “queuetopia” (1950) to describe political practices, and as a way of “warn[ing] Britain that under the [Labor] Opposition they might be transformed into a socialist country in which people were required to queue for everything” (Toksvig 126–27).

3. Coincidentally or not, 1979 was also the year when “Justice Minister Petrônio Portella’s amnesty bill, [was] approved by Congress in August” (Skidmore 217–18), thus beginning the political opening in the country.

4. Another example of “human cattle” in literature can be seen in *Fazenda Modelo*, “*novela pecuária*,” a 1974 dystopian novel by Chico Buarque de Hollanda written after his return from a self-imposed exile in Europe (1969–70), a social critique in the same vein as Orwell’s and Huxley’s, where Chico denounces the dominating and censorial nature of Brazilian politics through the “model farm” where humans are portrayed as cows and bulls following a “progressive,” totalitarian and dysfunctional regime.

5. This “future” can be directly related to the notion that Brazil has been considered a “nation of the future,” mostly since the publication of Stefan Zweig optimistic *Brasil, País do Futuro* (1941), and Legião Urbana’s (a Brazilian rock band) song *1965 (Duas Tribos)* (1989), where they criticize the *modus operandi* of the military dictatorship, pointing out some of the atrocities committed in the “name of the nation.”

6. “Disparada” was composed between two symbolic periods in Brazilian history: 1964, with the beginning of the military dictatorship; and 1968, with the government issuing one of the most draconian decrees of the dictatorship, the Ato Institucional Número Cinco, or AI-5.

7. According to Severiano and de Mello (9), the ass’s jaw also gave the song a “bigger rusticity” by evoking “a strong vision of the drought” through its sharp sound. Another important connotation for the ass’s jaw, which comes from the Bible, is one of the large powers it holds when in the “right” hands, when “. . . Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men” (Judges 15:16). This reference, even if unconsciously, resonates on the power being now in the hands of the people.

Works Cited

- Cunha, Euclides da. *Os Sertões: Campanha de Canudos*. 1902. São Paulo: Ateliê Editorial, 2001. Print.
- Dasa, Sahadeva. *Capitalism, Communism and Cowism: A New Economics for the 21st Century*. Soul Science UP, 2011. Print.
- Dunn, Christopher. *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2001. Print.
- Ferreira, Aurélio Buarque de Hollanda. *Mini Aurélio Século XXI*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2000. Print.
- Freudenburg, Kirk. *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001. Print.
- Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*. 1932. London: Grafton Books, 1987. Print.
- . *Brave New World Revisited*. 1958. London: Flamingo, 1994. Print.

- Kun, Josh. *Audiotopia: Music, Race, and America*. Los Angeles and Berkeley: U of California P, 2005. Print.
- Langland, Victoria. *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil*. Durham and London: Duke UP, 2013.
- Madan, Martin. *A New Literal Translation of Juvenal and Persius: With Copious Explanatory Notes, by Which These Difficult Satirists are Rendered Easy and Familiar to the Reader*. London: N. Bliss, 1807. Print.
- McGowan, Chris and Ricardo Pessanha. *The Brazilian Sound: Samba, Bossa Nova and the Popular Music of Brazil*. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1998. Print.
- McLean, Joseph E. *Two Cows*. New Jersey: Princeton Alumni Weekly, Vol. L, February 3, 1950, No. 16, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1950. Print.
- Pearsall, Judy and Bill Trumble. “-ism.” *Oxford English Reference Dictionary*. New York: Oxford UP, 2008. Print.
- A Primer of Capitalism: Illustrated*. New York: J. Walter Thompson Co., 1937. Pamphlet.
- Sanford, Eva Matthews. “Bread and Circuses.” *The Classical Weekly* 45.2 (26 Nov. 1951). 17–21. Classical Association of the Atlantic Studies. Web. 2 Nov. 2013.
- Severiano, Jairo and Zuza Homem de Mello. *A canção no tempo: 85 anos de músicas brasileiras—vol. 2: 1958–1985*. São Paulo: Editora 34, 1998. Print.
- Skidmore, Thomas E. *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964–85*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988. Print.
- Srivastava, A. R. N. *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India, 2005.
- Toksvig, Sandi. *Peas & Queues: The Minefield of Modern Manners*. London: Profile Books, 2013. Print.
- Veloso, Caetano. *Verdade tropical*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2004. Print.