

**The Samba Controversy between Noel Rosa and Wilson Batista:
Intertextuality and the Meanders of Composition / *A polêmica do
samba entre Noel Rosa e Wilson Batista: a intertextualidade e os
meandros da composição***

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the meanders of composition and their intertextuality in the samba controversy between Noel Rosa and Wilson Batista. We observe dialogism in the verbal and musical interaction between the samba writers and several texts of the 1930s. When ears are in tune with the “samba controversy,” one observes that the compositions reveal inexorable tensions between the festive world of the “malandro” and the limits of the reality of the time. Accordingly, based on studies that address this theme, we aim to present an insight into this musical “duel,” which is not restricted to purely aesthetics issues, but certainly disseminated in society.

KEYWORDS: Samba; Controversy; Intertextuality

RESUMO

O presente artigo tem como objetivo analisar os meandros da composição e suas intertextualidades na polêmica do samba entre Noel Rosa e Wilson Batista, observando o dialogismo na interação verbal e musical entre os autores e os diversos textos da década de 1930. Ao apurar os ouvidos sobre a “polêmica do samba” observa-se que as composições revelam tensões inexoráveis entre um mundo festivo do “malandro” e os limites da realidade da época. Desse modo, com suporte em estudos que tratam deste tema, busca-se trazer à tona um insight sobre este “duelo” musical que está, certamente, muito mais disseminado na sociedade que restrito a questões puramente estéticas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Samba; Polêmica; Intertextualidade

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Introduction

The birth of the Brazilian Republic reaffirmed the need for social and aesthetic development of our popular music. During the Colonial Period, there was no popular music that could actually be called Brazilian music. The few existing documents show that groups such as Portuguese, blacks and native Brazilians had their own particular musical manifestation. At the end of the eighteenth century, on the verge of Independence, certain musical forms and constancies began to take shape, such as *lundu*,¹ *modinha*² and syncopation (ANDRADE, 1962). Only in the late nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, with the advent of the Republic, did the urban popular music begin to take root amidst social tensions and cultural struggles. It was greatly influenced by folk and classical music (NAPOLITANO, 2002).

The cultural manifestations in the early twentieth century brought do evidence *reisados*,³ dramatic dances,⁴ *congós* and *congados*,⁵ *cabocolinhos*,⁶ *caiapós*, *bumba meu boi*,⁷ etc., many of which had their lyrics and music arranged by anonymous urban musicians/poets, contrasting with the classical music of the big ballrooms. In this context, the *modinha* leaves the “pianos of the big ballrooms” to go to the “guitars at the

¹ Note from the article authors for this English version: Mixture of Brazilian and African rhythms, created from the musical manifestation of slaves. (DINIZ, André. *Almanaque do samba*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor Ltda, 2006).

² Note from the article authors for this English version: Brazilian composition of European influence, popular in the ballrooms of the elites. (DINIZ, André. *Almanaque do samba*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor Ltda, 2006).

³ Note from the article authors for this English version: A kind of dance, brought to Brazil by the Portuguese in the colonial period.

⁴ Note from the article authors for this English version: Dances that accompany music with dramatization of a theme of a cultural fact, “in line with a traditional theme, they respect the formal principle of the suite, i.e., a musical set constituted by a group of pieces of choreography” (ANDRADE, 1972, p.71). (Note by the authors of this article for its English version). Text in original: “Dança que acompanha as músicas com dramatização de um tema dentro de um fato cultural: ‘obedecendo a um tema dado tradicional, respeitam o princípio formal da suíte, i.e. obra musical constituída pela seriação de várias peças coreográficas” (Andrade, 1972, p.71).

⁵ Note from the article authors for this English version: African-Brazilian dramatic dance and religious-cultural manifestations, in which the coronation of a king of Congo is enacted.

⁶ Note from the article authors for this English version: Folk dance, performed especially during Carnival, in the state of Pernambuco, when people wear costumes which native Brazilians used to wear in dance performances and in war.

⁷ Note from the article authors for this English version: The most exemplary and also the most complex, the strangest, the most original of all dramatic dances, according to Andrade (1962).

corners,” along with maxixe⁸ and samba, giving way to the formation of groups of minstrels, *chorinho* players, toada⁹ musicians and rural dances. From this moment on, popular music was defined rapidly and became the most beautiful characterization of our culture (ANDRADE, 1962).

Near the Provisional Government of Getúlio Vargas, amidst this “definition,” and among groups of minstrels and of *chorinho* players, Noel Rosa appeared – a musician and poet who understood the phenomenon of “inventing” the Brazilian popular music. According to Mayra Pinto (2012, p.16), Noel Rosa

... had the sensibility to understand the social and artistic phenomenon, which was emerging as the possibility – the only one in the history of popular songs up to that moment –, to make his voice heard nationwide, a voice which was still weak in the beginning of his career in 1929, one of a samba writer who was starting his professionalization trajectory.¹⁰

In 1931, Noel Rosa finally started to dedicate himself solely to his musical career. Such decision was fundamental for samba. Because of Rosa and contemporary musicians, samba started to have, on the aesthetic level, a more elaborate musical punctuation, as opposed to the marked characteristics inherited from other rhythms such as *maxixe* and *marchinhas* (SANDRONI, 1996). It also incorporated prosaic features, speech intonation, its own vocabulary and syntax, simulation of dialogue, elements of orality etc., creating an unprecedented sonority. According to Tatit (2004, p.20), it finally became the samba as it is known today: “an ideal place to handle music in its proximity to speech.”¹¹

⁸ Note from the article authors for this English version: Ballroom dance created by African Brazilians, also known as Brazilian “tango.” (DINIZ, André. *Almanaque do samba*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor Ltda, 2006).

⁹ Note from the article authors for this English version: Rhythm of Paraguayan influence, normally performed with guitars, by country music duos.

¹⁰ TN. The English translations of quotes from books not published in English have been done by the translator of this article for the purpose of its publication. Text in original: “Teve a sensibilidade para captar um fenômeno social e artístico que estava surgindo como a possibilidade, única na história da canção popular até aquele momento, de se fazer ouvir em nível nacional uma voz, ainda fraca quando começou a produzir em 1929, de um compositor de sambas que iniciava sua trajetória de profissionalização”.

¹¹Text in original: “um lugar ideal para manobrar o canto na tangente da fala”.

In this context, the several characters of the *morro*¹² and of the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro became gradually famous nationwide, due to the expansion of Brazilian popular music on the radio, in conformity with the populist process of urbanization in the Getúlio Vargas government. Such government gave importance to radio broadcast and considered samba a symbol of the national identity (VIANA, 2002). By means of an analyzing and classifying perspective, the purpose of this paper was to extract, in an artificial way, the spirit of the *malandro*.¹³ The *malandro*, infused with Romanticism, was made immortal in the samba lyrics in the first half of the twentieth century.

Such character has a *bon vivant* appeal, which contrasts with the formality of the “modern times.” Therefore, according to Mayra Pinto (2012, p.19): “there are indications of inexorable tensions between the festive world of the *malandro* and the limitations of reality”¹⁴:

The critical feature of humor related to irony will be the focus of an utterance marked by the systematic opposition to dominating values. Economic values, for instance, are subject to constant mockery, as to their cultivated social importance. This is generally depicted through the voices of characters who do not comply with the social norms of good behavior – *sambistas*, *malandros*, vagrants, women (often

¹² Note from the article authors for this English version: Area in the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, caused by population growth and by the expansion of the central part of the city. Such human agglomeration was later named “favelas,” i.e. - “slums.”

TN. Shaw (2002) translates *morro* as “hillside shantytown,” and Weinoldt (2000) and Oliven (2011) translate it as “hills.” However, these authors use the translations in brackets, keeping the word in Portuguese in their texts. Cf. SHAW, Lisa. Samba and Brasilidade: Notions of National Identity in the Lyrics of Noel Rosa. *Lusotopie* 2002/2: pp.81-96. Available at: <<http://www.lusotopie.sciencespobordeaux.fr/shaw.pdf>>. Access on: April 18th, 2015 / WEINOLDT, Kirsten. Tasting Noel. In: BRAZZIL, 2000. Available at: <<http://www.brazzil.com/cvrfeb00.htm>>. Access on: April 18th, 2015 / OLIVEN, Ruben G. The Imaginary of Brazilian Popular music. In *Vibrant, Virtual Braz. Anthr.* Vol.8 no.1 Brasília Jan./June 2011. Available at: <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/vb/v8n1/a07v8n1>. Access on: April 18th, 2015.

¹³ TN. According to Oliven (2011), the “malandro” (“rogue”) is generally an important male character in sambas, and the word is used in Brazilian society to identify a clever, easy-living trickster. Along the text, the author keeps the word *malandro* in Portuguese. McCann (2004, p.53) does not translate the word either, but presents the following explanation: “scoundrel, or rogue [...] the malandro – a flashy petty criminal, disdainful of work and domesticity – was an idealized social type rapidly becoming an iconic figure in Brazilian popular culture, and a stock figure in the samba lyrics of the period.” Shaw (2002) and Weinoldt (2000) also use the word in Portuguese in their texts. For reference of Oliven (2011), Shaw (2002), and Weinoldt (2000), see footnote 13. The reference for McCann’s work is McCANN, Bryan. *Hello, Hello, Brazil: Popular Music in the Making of Modern Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

¹⁴ Text in original: “há indicação de tensões inexoráveis entre o festivo mundo do malandro e as limitações da realidade”.

portrayed as mistresses of married men), pimps. Even homosexual conduct was considered to be in opposition to the existing standards, in a Noel Rosa's song.^{15 16}

The musical “controversy”¹⁷ between Noel Rosa and Wilson Batista is about these characters who “do not comply with the social norms of good behavior.” The musical “controversy” possibly arises from such inexorable tensions. Noel Rosa was already famous at the time. According to Dorival Caymmi, he “[...] had several attributes, but was especially a poet”¹⁸ (CHEDIAK, 2009, p.14). Wilson Batista was beginning his career, having “graduated with honors in several formats of samba”¹⁹ after the controversy, as stated by Tárík de Souza (2003, p.111). Such controversy is the subject matter of this paper.

Finally, in this study we intend to analyze the intertextual relation among the different works created in the mentioned context, observing the dialogism resulting from the interaction between both *sambistas*, and their interactions with many Brazilian cultural texts of the 1930s.

1 The Samba Controversy

In 1933, Silvio Caldas sang Wilson Batista's samba *Lenço no pescoço* (Scarf Round my Neck)²⁰, which started the notorious musical controversy with Noel Rosa:

My hat askew / Dragging my clogs / My scarf round my neck / My
razor in my pocket / I pass by swinging / I tease and challenge / I am
proud / Of being such a loafer / I know they talk about / These ways of

¹⁵ *Mulato bamba* - a tribute to Madame Sata, a homosexual malandro, famous in the bohemian life in the outskirts of the city of Rio de Janeiro, in Noel Rosa's time.

¹⁶ Text in original: “O viés crítico do humor quanto da ironia será a tônica de uma enunciação marcada pela oposição sistemática aos valores dominantes. Os valores econômicos, por exemplo, são expostos a um constante deboche de sua cultivada importância social, o que acontece geralmente por intermédio da voz de personagens que estão fora do padrão oficial de boa conduta – o sambista, o malandro, o vagabundo, as mulheres (quase sempre trazidas na condição de amantes), gigolôs, e até mesmo a conduta homossexual chegou a ser contraponto para padrões vigentes numa canção de Noel”.

¹⁷ The controversy first appeared as such in the long play “Polêmica,” Odeon Records in 1956 (GASPAROTTO, 2012).

¹⁸Text in original: “[...] reunia uma porção de qualidades, mas era, principalmente, o poeta”.

¹⁹Text in original: “diplomou-se com louvor nos vários formatos de samba”.

²⁰ NT. English translation by Oliven (2011). For reference, see footnote 13.

mine / I see those who work / Living in misery / I am a loafer /
Because I had a tendency for it / I remember, as a child / I would play
samba-canção songs by ear.^{21 22}

According to Rocha (2006a, p.125) “there was a time when one could tell if a person was a *malandro* or not [...] just by looking at the clothes he wore. Wearing smart clothes was part of the *ethos* of the *malandro*.”²³ The street was the catwalk. Accordingly, the theme of clothing establishes intertextual relations with, for example, Noel Rosa's samba *Com que roupa?* (With which outfit?)²⁴ (ALMIRANTE, 1977). The *malandro* as a loafer relates to several texts, such as the novels *Memórias de um Sargento de milícias* and *O cortiço e Macunaíma* (ROSA, 2009), which, along with the “tensions and limitations of reality,” gave Wilson Batista, in 1933, the necessary inspiration his creation. His work explicitly addresses these symbolic and material features of the *malandro*.

Wilson Batista, appropriating the themes and the context mentioned above, portrays the malicious feature of the *malandro*: “I pass by swinging / I tease and challenge.” He finishes the lyrics, in a provocative manner, by referring to the “Vagrancy Law”²⁵ (SILVA, 2013), which considered *malandros* as criminals, and punished them with prison and forced labor:

²¹ Lenço no pescoço (*Scarf Round my Neck*). (Wilson Batista). Recorded by Claudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzguir. O Samba carioca de Wilson Baptista. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 11.

²² TN. English translation by Oliven (2011). For reference, see footnote 13.

²³ Text in original: “houve um tempo em que o uso de determinada roupa era também um modo de dizer se o indivíduo era ou não malandro [...] andar bem vestido fazia parte do *ethos* do malandro”.

²⁴ TN. English translation by Oliven (2011). For reference, see footnote 13.

²⁵ In the 1890 Brazilian Criminal Code (Decree No. 847 of October 11th, 1890), the criminal type is characterized in chapters XII “PANHANDLERS AND INEBRIATES” and XIII “VAGRANTS AND CAPOEIRAS”, as in Article 399, in verbis: Failure to exercise a profession, occupation, or any other activity that provides a means of living, and having no means of subsistence and place of dwelling, or obtaining a livelihood by an occupation strictly prohibited by law or clearly offensive to the moral and good manners. Penalty: imprisonment of 15 to 30 days.”

Available at: <http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-847-11-outubro-1890-503086-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html> Access on: May 15th, 2015

TN. Translation of the law taken from Buchanan (2012). Reference: BUCHANAN, Kelly. *Capoeira: from crime to culture*. Library of Congress. Available at <http://blogs.loc.gov/law/2012/10/capoeira-from-crime-to-culture/>. Access on May 20th, 2015

Text in original: “No Código Penal Brasileiro de 1890 (Decreto nº 847, de 11 de Outubro de 1890) encontramos o tipo penal nos capítulos XII “DOS MENDIGOS E ÉBRIOS” e XIII “DOS VADIOS E CAPOEIRAS”, como no exemplo do Art. 399, in verbis: Deixar de exercitar profissão, ofício, ou qualquer mister em que ganhe a vida, não possuindo meios de subsistência e domicílio certo em que habite; prover subsistência por meio de ocupação proibida por lei, ou manifestamente ofensiva da moral

The control of *malandragem*, [...] the control and surveillance at popular parties, such as Carnival, as well as the acclaim for the quiet citizen and for the family, were part of police daily work. According to the criminal concept, the society was against loafers, economically passive individuals, and feared their dangerousness. Explaining directly: those who did not have an income were automatically associated with the category of vagrants, as they had a tendency to fulfill their needs by doing “criminal tricks and violence.” That is why vagrancy was a state which was socially dangerous par excellence (CANCELLI, 1993, p.33).²⁶

It is also possible to note, in the song, an implicit and ironic social criticism of the labor policies and of the economic rise in the political period of the time: “I see those who work / Living in misery.”²⁷ This demonstrates the freedom of the *sambista*, who places himself outside “daily life.” It also exposes the spirit of the artist. According to Bakhtin, in the essay Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity (BAKHTIN, 1990, pp. 190-191), the artist is “[...] someone who not only partakes in life from within (practical, social, political, moral, religious life), and understands it from within, but someone who also loves it from without [...]”²⁸

Such song caused a stir in the media of the time, and influenced Orestes Barbosa to state in the newspaper “A Hora”: that “after the samba was analyzed from the perspective of the political ideology of the time, the new song performed by Sílvio

e dos bons costumes”. Pena – “de prisão celular por quinze a trinta dias”. Disponível em: <http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-847-11-outubro-1890-503086-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html> Acessado em 17/05/2015”.

²⁶Text in original: “O controle da malandragem, [...] o controle e a tutela policiais nas festas populares, como o carnaval, e a exaltação ao cidadão pacato e à família faziam parte do cotidiano policial. Segundo os conceitos criminais, a sociedade voltava-se contra o vadio, indivíduo economicamente passivo, por temer a sua periculosidade. A explicação direta: quem não dispunha de uma renda para manter-se estava automaticamente integrado à categoria de vagabundos, porque existia uma tendência a satisfazer suas necessidades pelo 'ardil criminoso e da violência', por isso a vadiagem era um estado socialmente perigoso por excelência”

²⁷At a time when living off music was not considered as having a real job, working, for Wilson Batista, was a reason for discredit, as in his song: “You know the mason Waldemar [...] He builds so many houses but does not have a place to live.” Text in original: “Você conhece o pedreiro Waldemar [...] Faz tanta casa e não tem onde morar”.

²⁸ BAKHTIN, M. Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity. In: BAKHTIN, M. *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin. Edited by Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov. Translation and notes by Vadim Liapunov. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1990. pp.4-256.

Caldas, which advocates crime, cannot be forgiven”²⁹ (PARANHOS, 2003, p.81). This indicates “tensions” in the environment which the *sambista* frequented. In this context, Dealtry (2011, p.116) comments:

He identifies the subject, and reaffirms his identity amidst a mass of miserable anonymous workers. At the same time, he echoes the voice of the society who saw *sambistas* as *malandros*. This is the razor's edge where the *sambistas* from that time are placed. On the one hand, the identification between *sambista* and samba ensures visibility to a person who comes from popular classes, and suffers the limits of social mobility. On the other hand, the visibility which *sambistas* achieve make them a threat to the State, which, even before Getúlio Vargas took office, sought to control the imaginary of the classes that were excluded from the process of modernization in the country.³⁰

The discourse and the repercussion of *Lenço no pescoço* (Scarf Round my Neck) are known by Noel Rosa. They prompt him to respond with poetry, in the samba *Rapaz folgado* (Impudent Lad)³¹, probably because of the melody copied by Wilson Batista in “I know they talk about / These ways of mine / I see those who work / Living in misery,” corresponding to the melody in Noel Rosa's song *Malandro Medroso* (Fearful Malandro)³² in “My conscience hurt me / I avoid competition / I look after myself”³³ (CHEDIAK, 2009, p.62). According to Fenerick (2007), Wilson Batista's lyrics establish a conflict about the perspective of bohemia, at least on the surface. It can also be said that another plausible reason for the responsive motivation may be related to personal reasons, as Noel Rosa had lost a dispute over the love of “a young brunette

²⁹Text in original: “num momento em que se faz a higienização poética do samba, a nova produção de Silvio Caldas, pregando o crime por música, não tem perdão”.

³⁰Text in original: “Ao mesmo tempo em que identifica esse sujeito, afirmando sua identidade em meio a massa de anônimos trabalhadores miseráveis, ele igualmente ecoa a fala da sociedade que via no *sambista* sinônimo de *malandro*. Esse é o fio da navalha pela qual transita o *sambista* daquela época. Se por um lado, a identificação entre *sambista* e o samba assegura visibilidade ao sujeito vindo das camadas populares, sofrendo com a restrita mobilidade social, por outro lado, a visibilidade que esses compositores alcançam os torna uma ameaça ao Estado que, mesmo antes de Getúlio Vargas chegar ao poder, tinha a preocupação de controlar o imaginário circulante entre as classes excluídas do processo de modernização do país”.

³¹TN. English translation by Oliven (2011).

³² *Malandro Medroso* (Fearful *Malandro*). (Noel Rosa) Noel pela primeira vez. Velas/Funarte Records. 2000. Record 1. Track 5.

³³ TN. Shaw (2002).

from the Novo México Cabaret”³⁴ (GOMES, 1985). Such dispute was won by Wilson Batista:

Stop dragging your clogs / Because clogs are not sandals / Get that white scarf off your neck / Buy yourself some shoes and a tie / Throw away this razor which weighs you down / As well as the hat tipped to one side / I want you to escape from the police / By writing a *samba-canção* song / I have already given you paper and pencil / Find yourself a girlfriend and a guitar / *Malandro* is a defeatist word / Which is only good for / Devaluing the *sambista* / I’m telling civilized folks / To stop calling you a *malandro* / But just an impudent lad.^{35 36}

The deconstruction of the former character by Noel Rosa “indicates a revisionary movement, which is consubstantial with an antithetical complementation: the young poet preserves the terms of the precursor poem, but he alters its meaning”³⁷ (NITRINI, 2000, p.125). In other words, according to Harold Bloom (1991 *apud* NITRINI 2000), the poet makes use of a creating tool called *Tessera*. In this case in particular, the character is separated from his external signs: “elements which are indispensable for those who make the body a synonym of identity”³⁸ (DEALTRY, 2011, p.118).

This deviation reflects a reversibility in the original theme: When Noel Rosa introduces the “well dressed” *malandro* (“Buy yourself some shoes and a tie”), and when he invites the *malandro* to be a samba writer in the society (“I have already given you paper and pencil”), he gets close and vests the *malandro* with another identity: one of the “*malandro-sambista*,” found in the popular environments, far from the morro (GASPAROTTO, 2011).

When one observes the implicit intertext, the opposition between Wilson Batista's “*malandro*” and Noel Rosa's “*malandro-sambista*” also brings, as a premise, when one observes the implicit intertext, a social conflict established in the dichotomies

³⁴Text in original: “jovem morena do Cabaret Novo México”.

³⁵*Rapaz folgado* (“*Impudent Lad*”). (Noel Rosa). Recorded by Claudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzuguir. O Samba carioca de Wilson Baptista. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 12.

³⁶TN. English translation by Oliven (2011).

³⁷Text in original: “indica um movimento revisionário consubstanciado numa complementação antiética: o poeta efebo preserva os termos do poema-antecedente, mas altera seu significado”.

³⁸Text in original: “elementos imprescindíveis a quem faz do corpo um sinônimo de identidade”.

poor/rich, black/white, *morro/asfalto*³⁹: Several researchers analyze the “*samba malandro*” a resistance by “ex-slaves” to regular labor. When they felt marginalized by society, they sought a form of expression in music (GOMES, 1999). On the other hand, in the verse “All the value of a *sambista*”⁴⁰ and in the proposal of his insertion in society as a samba writer, the “*malandro-sambista*” brings labor and the very “sale of labor-power” as instruments of social mobility, valuation and civilization of the citizen. This is in conformity with Getúlio Vargas's discourse on the incorporating the popular classes:

Workers, even though they were poor, they were good, honest men. Their difficulties and their poverty should not be associated with moral flaws, but with the structural conditions of the social-economic system instead. Such conditions could be overcome. Social mobility for workers, therefore, was related to and depended on intervention by public authorities, the only force capable of overcoming the serious problems that prevented their social mobility, and on whose conditions it was dependent. The State, personified in Getúlio Vargas, would enable workers to access the necessary resources for individual and social accomplishments. At this time in Brazil, the men-State relation was founded, to a great extent, on this mythology of workers and labor as sources of wealth, happiness and social order (GOMES, 1999, p.71).⁴¹

Therefore, there are similarities between the discourse of social mobility by the “*malandro-sambista*,” in Noel Rosa's song, and the ideals personified in the notion of “production” as a means to serve the country.

At the end of the samba, in the verse “I’m telling civilized folks” Rosa directs his discourse to a wider audience: to the “civilized folks” who saw the *malandro* as a synonym of danger. He proposes thereby a new identity which could be approved by the

³⁹ TN. According to Oliven (2011), Wilson represented samba from the *morro* (in the world of the black urban poor), and Noel represented the samba from the *asfalto* - “the asphalt” (in middleclass districts with a greater participation of whites). For reference, see footnote 13.

⁴⁰ Text in original: “Todo o valor do sambista”.

⁴¹ Text in original: “O trabalhador, mesmo sendo pobre, era um homem bom e honesto. Suas dificuldades e sua pobreza não deviam ser associadas a falhas morais, mas às condições estruturais do sistema socioeconômico, que podiam ser vencidas. A ascensão social do trabalhador estava, portanto, relacionada à intervenção do poder público e na dependência deste, única força capaz de superar os enormes problemas que condicionavam e impediam sua realização pessoal. Era o Estado, personificado na figura de Vargas, que possibilitaria o acesso dos trabalhadores aos instrumentos de realização individual e social. Desde então, no Brasil, a relação homem do povo/Estado fundou-se, em grande medida, nessa mitologia do trabalhador e do trabalho como fonte de riqueza, felicidade e ordem social”.

“good society.” He suggests switching a socially “more acceptable” linguistic sign, as opposed to the one that insists on characterizing the *malandro's* identity with a discourse that attracts repression, i.e., a “black, marginal and averse to work”⁴² identity (DEALTRY, 2011, p.118).

It is also important to emphasize that, when one looks into the profound structure of the intertext, that Noel Rosa uses the characteristics of the *malandro*, as mentioned earlier in *Lenço no pescoço* (Scarf Round my Neck), in several of his previous sambas.⁴³ It can also be noticed that he is friends with great “loafers,” *malandros* of the time, such as Zé Pretinho, Meia Noite, Kid Pepe etc (MÁXIMO; DIDIER, 1990). In other words, the author is displaced from the subject: “the subject loses his central role, and is replaced by several (or even two) social voices, which make him a historical and ideological subject”⁴⁴ (BARROS, 2003, p.1). Hence, we observe that the author’s conscience is here filled by elements which are external to it. These elements are necessary for the attainment of the dialogue: “the relation between a creator and his character [...] can never be entirely one of identification: it must maintain the external dimension with which the character engages in dialogue with its creator, as well as one in which the creator engages in dialogue with his character”⁴⁵ (SAMOYAULT, 2008, p.20).

In the samba controversy, in *Café Nice*,⁴⁶ Wilson Batista listens to and understands what Noel Rosa did: “Sooner or later what is heard and actively understood will find its response in the subsequent speech or behavior of the listener” (BAKHTIN, 2007, p.69). He responds, in the form of music, with the samba *Mocinho da Vila* (Little Boy from Vila Isabel):

⁴² Text in original: “negra, marginal e avessa ao trabalho”.

⁴³ Such as in the samba *Malandro Medroso* (Fearful *malandro*): “I owe you money / Don’t want to deny it / But I will pay will back when I can if the gambling allows / if politics consents / God willing.” Text in original: “Eu devo/ Não quero negar/ mas te pagarei quando puder se o jogo permitir/ se a política consentir/ e se Deus quiser [...]”.

⁴⁴Text in original: “o sujeito perde o papel de centro e é substituído por diferentes (ainda que duas) vozes sociais, que fazem dele um sujeito histórico e ideológico”.

⁴⁵Text in original: a relação de um criador com seu personagem [...] não pode nunca ser inteiramente de identificação: deve manter a dimensão exterior pela qual esse personagem dialoga com o autor tanto quanto o autor com ela”.

⁴⁶The most famous café in the Age of Radio, situated on Avenida Rio Branco. It was meeting place for singers and songwriters like Nássara, Orestes Barbosa, Herivelto Martins, Donga, Vadico, Ataulfo Alves, Noel Rosa, Francisco Alves, Wilson Batista, among others. (VIANA, 1998, p.110)

You who are a little boy from the Vila⁴⁷ / You talk a lot about guitar,
shack and other things / If you don't want to lose your name / Take
care of your microphone / and leave he who is a *malandro* in peace /
Your comment is unfair / He who speaks of *malandro* is a fool /
Malandro is not made/ I have a scarf round my neck, I challenge and I
also have my fame.^{48 49}

In this rebuttal, the title of the song *Mocinho da Vila* (Little Boy from Vila Isabel), immediately suggests Noel Rosa's discredit in a culture which would originally be the culture of the *morro* and of the outskirts of the city, as opposed to the one of the middle-class areas of which he was part. Here one can observe the introduction of an intertext, which replaces the subject with different social voices, and makes him a historical and ideological subject, who would represent a segment or a social class. Such segment or social class would be excluded, in the context of the poem, from the position which is entitled to say “what Brazilian culture is.” Nevertheless, Paranhos (2005, p.122) reports the difficulty to establish clear cultural and social boundaries among the comprise the discourse:

The opposition between drudging work⁵⁰ and musicians did not present itself to *sambistas* in a linear form, with two poles or two lives that do not touch. The mirror in which the creators of the urban samba in Rio de Janeiro saw themselves reflected broken and juxtaposed images of protagonists of a history they could not live as they wished. Amidst a permanent struggle with the daily needs, they were seen as people with suspicious attitudes, who needed to be recovered by the “respectable people” and then inserted in the labor market. It is not surprising that this discourse – abandoning the night life and its

⁴⁷ Note from the article authors for this English version: Human agglomeration in the outskirts of the cities. Vila Isabel, a traditional area in the city of Rio de Janeiro, is considered the cradle of samba.

⁴⁸ *Mocinho da Vila* (Little Boy from Vila Isabel). (Wilson Batista). Recorded by Claudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzguir. *O samba carioca de Wilson Baptista*. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 13.

⁴⁹Text in original: “Você que é mocinho da Vila / Fala muito em violão, barracão e outras coisas mais / Se não quiser perder o nome / Cuide do seu microfone e deixe / Quem é malandro em paz / Injusto é seu comentário / Fala de malandro quem é otário / Mas malandro não se faz / Eu de lenço no pescoço desacato e também tenho o meu cartaz”.

TN. The title of the song and of the English translation were taken from McCann (2004). For reference, see footnote 14.

⁵⁰ TN. In Oliven (2011), “batente” is translated as “drudging work.” For reference, see footnote 13.

pleasures and being called to work – was interwoven with the exaltation of *malandragem*.⁵¹

Back to analyzing what is explicit in Mocinho da Vila (Little Boy from Vila Isabel”), it can be noticed that Wilson Batista alludes to Noel Rosa's repertoire by quoting the song *Meu barracão* (My Shack)⁵²: “Today makes almost a year / That I won't visit / My shack there in Penha” (CHEDIAK, 2009, p.65). Batista also alludes to Rosa's fame at the time, so that everybody would know who he was referring to. At the end of the song, the *malandro's* clothing appears, which was deconstructed in *Rapaz folgado* (Impudent Lad). Thus, according to Bakhtin (1990, position 4553):

[...] the author becomes close to the hero only where there is no purity of axiological self-consciousness, where self-consciousness is possessed by the consciousness of another, where it becomes axiologically conscious of itself in an authoritative other [...].⁵³

Therefore, the text is situated in the social and historical scope of the character, in relation to the society in which he is inserted, as well as in its conditions and in the conditions of the music being analyzed. It does not crystallize in a meaning or in a fixed point: “it constitutes an intersection of textual surfaces: of the writer, of the addressee (or of the character), of the current context or of the previous context”⁵⁴ (NITRINI, 2000, p.159).

To retaliate, Noel Rosa, along with the musician Oswaldo Gogliano, also known as Vadico, writes a very successful samba – “Feitiço da Vila” (“Spell of the Vila”⁵⁵), whose original version was sung by João Petra de Barros in 1934:

⁵¹Text in original: “A oposição entre o batente e a batucada não se apresentava aos sambistas de forma linear, com dois polos ou dois horizontes de vida que não se tocam. O espelho na qual se enxergam os criadores do samba urbano carioca refletia imagens partidas e justapostas de protagonistas de uma história que muitas vezes não podiam dar-se ao luxo de viverem simplesmente ao bel-prazer. Às voltas com uma queda-de-braço permanente com as necessidades do dia-a-dia, vistos como pessoas de atitudes suspeitas, que parcelas “responsáveis” da sociedade procuravam recuperar para o mundo do trabalho, não é de todo surpreendente que o discurso do abandono da orgia e do chamado ao batente se entrecruzasse com a exaltação da *malandragem*”.

⁵² TN. English translation Weinoldt (2000). For reference, see footnote 13.

⁵³ For reference, see footnote 30.

⁵⁴Text in original: “constitui um cruzamento de superfícies textuais: a do escritor, do destinatário (ou personagem), do contexto atual ou anterior”.

⁵⁵ TN. English translation Weinoldt (2000). McCann (2004) translates the title as “Enchantment of the Vila.” For references, see footnote 13 and 14.

Who is born there in the Vila / Doesn't even hesitate / To embrace the samba / Which makes the branches / Of the grove dance / And the moon rise earlier / There in Vila Isabel / He who has graduated / Has no fear of the bully / São Paulo gives coffee/ Minas gives milk / And Vila Isabel gives samba / The Vila has A spell which is pure / Without candle without a penny / Which does us well / Having the name of a princess / Transformed the samba / Into a proper spell / Which captures the people / The sun in the Vila is sad / Samba doesn't help / Because the people beg / Sun, for the love of God / Don't come now / That the dark women / Will soon go away / I know all I do / Know where I'm going / Passion doesn't annihilate me / But I have to say / modesty aside / I'm from the Vila / I'm from the Vila!^{56 57}

Noel Rosa's active responsive attitude contradicts Wilson Batista, demonstrating the positive relation between the Vila and the samba: it is important to notice the beauty of the image of the branches moving with the sound of samba, and the importance Noel Rosa assigns to Vila Isabel. He compares it to São Paulo and to Minas Gerais. For Rosa, samba, *vis-à-vis* coffee and milk, becomes a consumer “product,” with the radio and music industries:

There is nothing more appropriate for the Rio de Janeiro samba, later considered Brazilian, to be finally defined as a musical style. In Rosa's own city, there were already radios, record companies and the public interest which would facilitate (but not determine – this is another issue) the adoption of samba as a new trend in any Brazilian city. Samba has “everything” at its disposal to become national music (VIANNA, 2002, p.110).⁵⁸

In the samba *Feitiço da Vila* (Spell of the Vila), one can notice a direct, personal response to Wilson Batista's insults and threats: “He who has graduated / Has no fear of the bully,” in reaction to the verses in *Mocinho da Vila* (Little Boy from Vila Isabel): “If you don't want to lose your name” and “He who speaks of *malandro* is a fool.”

⁵⁶Feitiço da Vila (Spell of the Vila). (Noel Rosa). Recorded by Claudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzuguir. O Samba carioca de Wilson Baptista. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 14.

⁵⁷ TN. McCann (2004, p.56) uses the terms “bacharel do samba” in Portuguese, explaining that the bacharel “is one with an advanced degree.” For reference, see footnote 14.

⁵⁸ Text in original: “Nada mais propício para o samba carioca, mais tarde tido como brasileiro, finalmente se definir como estilo musical. Em sua própria cidade, já havia rádios, as gravadoras e o interesse político que facilitariam (mas não determinariam – isso é outro problema) sua adoção como nova moda em qualquer cidade brasileira. O samba tem “tudo” a seu dispor para se transformar em música nacional”

Noel Rosa continues the poem by honoring Vila Isabel with *Feitiço Decente* (Decent Spell).⁵⁹ He might want to render positivity to it when the samba is observed as a “spell” that asks the sun not to come because the dark women would go away. Furthermore, along with the words *farofa*, *vela* and *vintém*,⁶⁰ “decent spell” sounds like an attack against the symbols of the locus of Wilson Batista’s *malandro* – the *morro*, about things related to African religious customs, especially in the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, in this case in particular. The *farofa*, the candle and the penny are used as offerings to religious entities in the African-Brazilian culture (LODY, 2003).

Nevertheless, Silva and Silva (2010, p.271) state that:

[...] it is important to reflect on the meaning of words, and on the context in which the song was written so that we are not limited to common sense. Accordingly, from the perspective of common sense, the idea of a “spell” would refer to something negative, associated with bewitchment, used in African-Brazilian or European religions, by gypsies and witches.⁶¹

Hence, if we are not limited to “common sense,” and if we observe the context of the controversy between Noel Rosa and Wilson Batista, we have, in this analysis, the use of such concepts as attacks against the *locus* of the “*malandro*” as a character who is confused between author and hero (such attack obviously does not conceal the dichotomies black/white, rich/poor, *morro/asfalto*). At the same time, there is exaltation of the spell of the Vila, of its correspondence to samba, of *malandros* and of bohemian life, with its habits and influences. Finally, it is important to note the author’s ambiguous behavior, as he continues to merge with the hero, in his “life style,” away from “passions.” At the same time, he is passionate about Vila Isabel in its social context in the 1930s in Brazil.

⁵⁹ TN. English translation of the song according to Oliven (2011). For reference, see footnote 13.

⁶⁰ TN. In the English version of the song used in this article, the words are “a spell which is pure, without candle without a penny” (WEINOLDT, 2000). The word *farofa*, which is toasted cassava flour mixture, is not translated. For reference, see footnote 13.

⁶¹Text in original: “[...] é importante refletir sobre os significados das palavras e o contexto em que a música foi composta, para não nos limitarmos no senso comum. Nesse sentido, pelo prisma do senso comum, a ideia de “feitiço” designaria justamente algo negativo, associado ao encantamento manipulado através das religiões afro-brasileiras ou europeias como os gitanos e as bruxas-feiticeiras.”

The lyrics of *Feitiço da Vila* (The Spell of the Vila) had some verses added by Noel Rosa in the *Casé Program* (CASÉ, 1995). This time he looked back at his childhood, a time when the Vila was famous for attracting thieves. However, he affirmed that such time had passed and that the Vila was a place of tranquility and bohemia. (MÁXIMO; DIDIER, 1990):

Those who are born to dance samba / Cry to get nursing / In the rhythm of samba / I left home and looked at the moon and I've been on the street since then / The safest place / is our Vila / The cradle of impudent lads / There are no locks on the gates / There are no thieves in the Vila.⁶²

Such theme was probably inspired by the host of the Program, as Rosa was keen on improvisation:

The same mouth that found it difficult to perform the prosaic task of chewing was capable of ruminating the imponderable, the unheard of, the unthinkable. And he kept on advancing, making use of his linguistic ability to solve all problems (CHEDIAK, 2009, p.10).⁶³

Wilson Batista, not wasting any time, takes the opportunity to try to call the attention of Noel Rosa, who is at this time famous nationwide. And he writes *Conversa fiada* (All Talk)⁶⁴:

It is all talk / To say that the samba / In the Vila has a spell / I went and checked / Didn't see any of that / The Vila is quiet / But you have to be careful / Before you go to bed / Turn the key twice / I went to the Vila to see the branches of the grove move / And to see the cradle of the impudent lads / The moon was so lazy that night / The samba was killed / Then I started to cry.^{65 66}

⁶²Text in original: “Quem nasce pra sambar / Chora pra mamar / Em ritmo de samba / Eu já sai de casa olhando a lua e até hoje estou na rua / A zona mais tranquila / É a nossa Vila / O berço dos folgados / Não há um cadeado no portão / Porque na Vila não há ladrão”

⁶³Text in original: “A mesma boca que encontrava dificuldades em realizar a prosaica tarefa da mastigação era capaz de ruminar o imponderável, o inaudito, o impensado. E assim ele foi crescendo, valendo-se de sua habilidade linguística para solucionar todos os problemas”

⁶⁴TN. English translation of the song title according to Weinoldt (2000). For reference, see footnote 13.

⁶⁵ *Conversa fiada* (All Talk). (Wilson Batista) Recorded by Cláudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzuguir. O Samba carioca de Wilson Baptista. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 15.

⁶⁶ Text in original: “É conversa fiada / Dizerem que o samba / Na vila tem feitiço / Eu fui ver pra crer / E não vi nada disso / A Vila é tranquila / Porém é preciso cuidado: / Antes de irem dormir / Deem duas

This time Wilson Batista engaged in a revisionary movement, as Noel Rosa had done in *Rapaz folgado* (Impudent Lad), with the *malandro's* clothing and behavior. This time the movement was related to the “house” of Noel Rosa’s *malandro*, i.e., the Vila. The *sambista* deconstructs the previous text, by quoting it and altering its meaning. For Wilson Batista, in *Conversa fiada* (All Talk) there is no spell in the Vila; the Vila is not a quiet place and the samba which makes the branches of the grove dance for the impudent lads is bad quality music.

Such provocation about Rosa’s great “passion” (he does not let passions annihilate him), in a samba which is very elaborated as to melody and rhythm, makes him engage in dialogue again with Batista, with a samba called *Palpite infeliz* (Unhappy Thought)⁶⁷ in 1935:

Who are you who don't know what you're saying? / My God in Heaven, what an unhappy thought / Hooray for Estácio, Salgueiro, Mangueira, Oswaldo Cruz and Matriz/ Which always knew very well / That Vila doesn't want to suffocate anyone / Only wants to show that it also makes samba / To make a poem in the Vila is child's play / The sound of samba dances to the grove / I already called for you to see/ You didn't because you didn't want to/ Who are you who don't know what you're saying?/ Vila is an independent city / Which has samba but doesn't want the patent / Why pay attention to someone who doesn't know/ Where his nose is / Who are you who don't know what you're saying?⁶⁸

Noel Rosa resumes the discussion and this time, he brings the author closer to the hero. The author “must be situated on the boundary of the world he is bringing into being as the active creator of this world” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.191).⁶⁹ Rosa points to the lack of notoriety in Wilson Batista’s samba: “Who are you who don't know what you're saying?”.

voltas no cadeado / Eu fui lá na Vila ver o arvoredado se mexer / E conhecer o berço dos folgados / A lua nessa noite demorou tanto / Assassinaram-me um samba / Dai veio o meu pranto”.

⁶⁷TN. English translation by Weinoldt (2000). For reference, see footnote 13.

⁶⁸*Palpite infeliz* (Unhappy Thought). (Noel Rosa) Recorded by Claudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzuguir. O Samba carioca de Wilson Baptista. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 16.

⁶⁹ For reference, see footnote 30.

Such question also reflects Rosa's professional moment, and it signals a displacement of the social place of the samba, for it is not only the *morro* anymore, but all the Rio de Janeiro community of the time. Even though he says "that the Vila doesn't want to suffocate anyone," at the same time he discredits Wilson Batista for getting involved in samba: "Why pay attention to someone who doesn't know/ Where his nose is." He is inserted in an intertext in which the subject, this time, is replaced by different social voices: those that are not in the "social place of the samba."

This game of approving and discrediting in relation to samba and its characters demonstrates, in the dialogue among the segments of the society in Rio de Janeiro, that the samba no longer pertains exclusively to a certain ethnic or social group. This is interesting for the State's ideology, as marketing and as symbol of nationality, inasmuch as the classes are united by a national symbol (VIANNA, 2002). In opposition, this game reinforces the samba as a form of resistance and validation of black people's cultural values:

The image of "roda de samba" (samba group) would be back to the musical scene in several moments in the history of Brazilian music. It is always used as a critical image to industrialization and to the individualization of musical creation and its audience. The "roda de samba" would be the place for collective, "pure," "spontaneous" musical manifestation, in which the creativity of the social group that originated samba was relocated, almost as a rite (NAPOLITANO; WASSERMAN, 2000, p.170).⁷⁰

In the lyrics, Noel Rosa dialogues with a "new social space" of this rising "samba": Estácio de Sá, Salgueiro, Mangueira, Oswaldo Cruz and Matriz. He provokes Wilson Batista again when he considers the Vila as the "cradle" of samba with its musicality: "I already called for you to see / You didn't because you didn't want to."

Due to such provocation, Batista, as we shall see, starts to focus the discussion more than never on the feature of the author/hero. With a dirty trick, he mocks Noel Rosa's ugliness in the samba "Frankenstein da Vila" ("Frankenstein of the Vila"):

⁷⁰Text in original: "A imagem da "roda de samba" voltaria a cena musical em vários momentos da história da música brasileira, sempre utilizada como imagem crítica à industrialização e a individualização da criação e audição musicais. A "roda de samba" seria o lugar de fala musical coletiva, "pura", "espontânea", onde a criatividade daquele grupo social que estaria na origem do samba, era recolocada, quase como um rito de origem".

You can never get a good impression / When you meet someone /
Who looks like Frankenstein / But as the saying goes / You lose a
good heart because of an ugly face / Among the ugly you are the top /
Everybody in the Vila knows / This hint is for you / Don't come and
say I don't know what I'm talking about / I'm your friend.^{71 72}

Wilson Batista, in this samba, compares Noel Rosa to the character of Mary Shelley's novel published in 1931, which was made into a movie in 1933. Rosa was “skinny and chinless”⁷³ (CHEDIAK, 2009, p.10). In this dialogue we can see an ironic criticism by Batista of a Rosa who is a “product” of the media of the time. As the radio and music industry expanded, there were also policies in favor of film importation and distribution (SIMIS, 1996) in Brazil, which increasingly got more evident and made the circle culture a mass circle, with newspapers, magazines, radios, films etc.

At the end of the song, Wilson Batista makes it “personal”: “Don't come and say I don't know what I'm talking about,”⁷⁴ directly quoting Noel Rosa's samba *Palpite infeliz* (Unhappy Thought)⁷⁵. In light of that challenge, Rosa, musically or poetically, decides not to respond, or maybe he does respond with silence. On the personal level, however, it is not the same, as Batista suggests that there was an attempt of a response in the backstage of the samba controversy, in the lyrics *Terra de cego* (Land of the Blind)⁷⁶: “You shouldn't appeal to noise / You can let off steam in verses / As it is not a pretty thing / To see a bacharel fight”⁷⁷:

Lose the bully obsession / Everybody knows that / You have
graduated in samba / You are the man in the Vila, I know / But in the
land of the blind / A one-eyed man is king / Not to end the discussion /

⁷¹ Frankenstein da Vila (Frankenstein of the Vila). (Wilson Batista) Recorded by Claudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzuguir. O Samba carioca de Wilson Baptista. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 17.

⁷²Text in original; “Boa impressão nunca se tem / Quando se encontra um certo alguém / Que até parece um Frankenstein / Mas, como diz o rifão / Por uma cara feia perde-se um bom coração / Entre os feios és o primeiro da fila / Todos reconhecem lá na Vila / Essa indireta é contigo / E depois não vás dizer que não sei o que digo / Sou teu amigo”.

⁷³Text in original “magrinho e sem queixo”.

⁷⁴Text in original: “E depois não vás dizer que eu não sei o que digo”.

⁷⁵ TN. English translation of the song title according to Weinoldt (2000). For reference, see footnote 13.

⁷⁶ TN. English translation of the song title according to Weinoldt (2000). For reference, see footnote 13.

⁷⁷ Text in original: “Não debes apelar / Para um barulho na mão / Em versos podes bem desabafar / Pois não fica bonito / Um bacharel brigar”. TN. McCann (2004, p.56) uses the terms “*bacharel do samba*” in Portuguese, explaining that the bacharel “is one with an advanced degree.” For reference, see footnote 14.

You shouldn't appeal to noise / You can let off steam in verses / As it is not a pretty thing / To see a bacharel fight.^{78 79}

Wilson Batista takes the opportunity to tease Noel, to debase his musicality and to discredit the Vila once more: “In the land of the blind / A one-eyed man is king.”⁸⁰ Finally, Noel Rosa, in order to create a diversion, makes use of a *Clinamem* (NITRINI, 2000), i.e., he swerves from the themes that surround the *malandro* in the controversy: clothing, behavior, locus, social rank, appearance and musicality. Tactfully, the *bacharel* of samba brings Wilson Batista to a musical partnership as a strategy to end the controversy. This time the theme is an old flame of both malandros: Ceci.⁸¹ Accordingly, with music by Wilson Batista⁸² and lyrics by Noel Rosa the samba *Deixa de ser convencida* (Don't be so Cocksure)⁸³ is born:

Stop being so cocksure / Everybody knows your ways / You are a great artist I know / I was also on the trapeze / Even threw somersault / On the wire (I got many medals) / On the ring of this life / You will be the slaughtered beast / I know acrobatics very well / So I don't believe / In love, in shared love.^{84 85}

Hence, by “creating a diversion” – swerving totally from the themes previously treated in the controversy –, and establishing a partnership by writing the lyrics for Wilson Batista's melody “bacharel of samba,” Noel Rosa terminates the controversy. However, he does not close, obviously, the dialogues between the two poets, nor those

⁷⁸ Terra de cego (Land of the Blind). (Wilson Batista) Recorded by Claudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzguir. O Samba carioca de Wilson Baptista. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 18.

⁷⁹Text in original: “Perde a mania de bamba / Todas sabem qual é / O teu diploma no samba / És o abafa da Vila, eu bem sei / Mas em terra de cego / Quem tem um olho é rei / Pra não terminar a discussão / Não deves apelar / Para um barulho na mão / Em versos podes bem desabafar / Pois não fica bonito / Um bacharel brigar”.

⁸⁰Text in original: “Em terra de cego / Quem tem um olho é rei”.

⁸¹ NOEL. Poeta da Vila. Directed by Ricardo Van Steen. Produced by Paulo Dantas. São Paulo: Movi&Art; Zohar Cinema, 2006. 1 DVD (96 min), widescreen, color.

⁸² About the melody of the samba Terra de Cego (Land of the Blind).

⁸³TN. English translation of the song title according to Weinoldt (2000). For reference, see footnote 13.

⁸⁴ Deixa de ser convencida (Don't be so Cocksure). (Wilson Batista/Noel Rosa) Recorded by Claudia Ventura and Rodrigo Alzguir. O Samba carioca de Wilson Baptista. Biscoito Fino. 2013. Record 2. Track 19.

⁸⁵Text in original: “Deixa de ser convencida / Todos sabem qual é / Teu modo de vida / És uma perfeita artista, em bem sei / Também fui do trapézio / Até salto mortal / No arame já dei (muita medalha eu ganhei!) / E no picadeiro desta vida / Serás a fera abatida / Conheço bem acrobacia / Pois isso não faço fé / Em amor, em amor de parceria”.

related to the several themes addressed in this paper. The context and the many voices that interweave with the texts mentioned herein still echo in the audience's senses, with which a kind of relationship is established and new dialogues are installed.

Final Considerations

When we compare the musical composition in the samba controversy between Noel Rosa and Wilson Batista to “discourse” – as to the development of thought, paraphrasing Blikstein (2003) and also as to the analysis of the development of the Brazilian society –, we can say that the musical compositions (especially those to which the society relates) make up an interconnected and indivisible *continuum*. This continuum is extended by many voices, connected in time and space, and supported by intertextuality.

Such intertextual support, moved by multiplicity, brings, to the samba controversy, the spirit of the artist who strengthened an external view of daily life, situated in the social and historical scope of the character, analyzed in relation to the society in which he is inserted, to its conditions and to the conditions of the music being studied. In the samba controversy, such artistic support, which caused and reflected the inexorable tensions of society, prompted and propelled the creation of nine songs, which addressed the clothing, behavior, place, passion, appearance and musicality, of both of the authors and the hero: one at a time, or both at the same time.

Accordingly, in these musical compositions there were constructions, deconstructions, identifications, approximations, opinions, passions, contradictions, personal matters, insults, threats, histories, stories, ideologies, ambiguities, diversions and even partnerships. All of these were involved in an environment of profound musicality and creativity, which entailed identifications among musicians and audiences.

In sum, scientifically speaking, the adjustment in the focus on the great samba controversy of the 1930s has brought into evidence the dialogism among several texts of the time. The background for all this was the responsive motivation of the authors and their creating tools, which, in turn, reflected a historical and social context of the time in

which they were inserted: the social classes, the ideological intervention by the State, the gradual integration of black people in the Brazilian society, and the rise of media industry and commerce in Brazil.

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