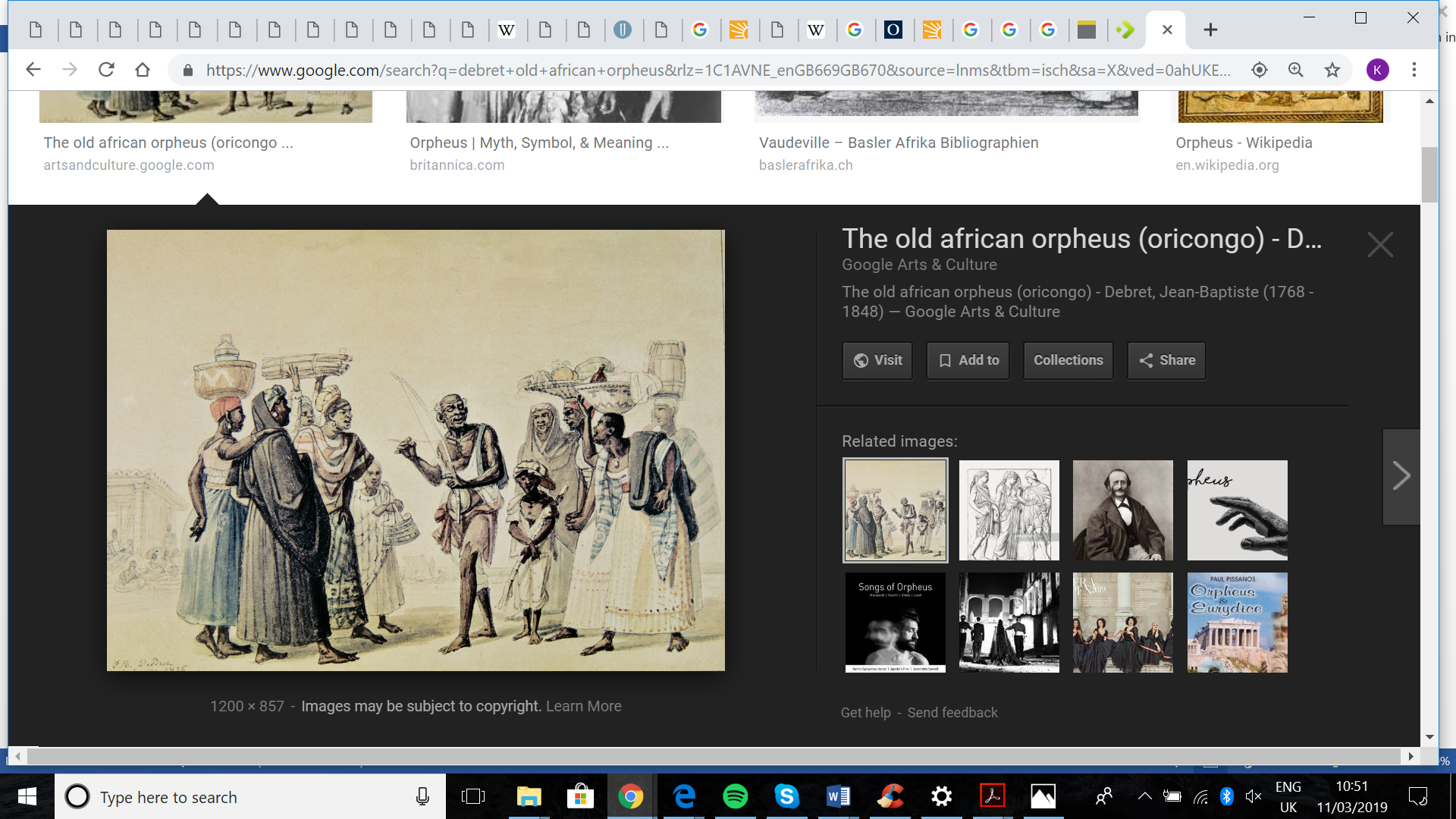
**Orphic Sounds: Musical Practice in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro**

**Orphic Reversal**



Jean Baptiste Debret, “Le viel orphée Africain (*oricongo*)” (Rio de Janeiro, 1826), *Voyage pittoresque et historique au Brésil*.

The 1834 travelogue or *Voyage pittoresque et historique au Brésil* by French painter Jean Baptiste Debret contains a watercolour entitled “Le viel orphée Africain (*oricongo*)” or “The Old African Orpheus (*oricongo*).”[[1]](#footnote-1) The image depicts an elderly slave playing a gourd-resonating musical bow—an *oricongo* in contemporary Bantu parlance and what today’s viewers may recognize as a *berimbau*, which would later in the nineteenth century become the leading instrument of the Brazilian martial art of *capoeira*.[[2]](#footnote-2) Awestruck, and arranged symmetrically on either side of this central figure are two groups of female street vendors, a couple of bypassers, and a child. They appear enraptured by the music’s Orphic powers as they listen to this solo performance. Not a product of Debret’s untrammelled imagination, this watercolour captures what was a common sight to Rio’s early nineteenth-century inhabitants: an African slave performing as a street minstrel. As a number of travel accounts and surviving sketches suggest, slave owners would often send their musically talented slaves wandering with their instruments into the city’s public spaces.[[3]](#footnote-3) It was their hope that these unfamiliar (to their mind “exotic”) performances could gather the onlooker’s attention and earn them a few extra coins. “This picture (“Le viel orphée Africain”), Debret wrote in his travelogue, “represents the misfortune of an old Negro slave reduced to begging, his little conductor carries a sugar cane destined for their common nourishment.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

Debret was not the only one to hear the *berimbau*’s Orphic undertones. The French cotton merchant and writer L. F. Tollenare detected “tuned and harmonious” sounds in his 1818 travel diary, and the English travellers Robert Walsh and James Wetherell perceived “three or four sweet notes” as well as “tinkling” sonorities a decade later.[[5]](#footnote-5) Comparisons to instruments of the harp family ensued: while for Debret, the instrument reminded him of the hammered dulcimer—a percussion-stringed instrument that retained medieval associations—Walsh described an occasion in which “a poor black minstrel boy, who played a very simple instrument … entertained [him] like a Welsh Harper, while we were at breakfast, and was so modest when we praised his music, he actually blushed through his dusky cheeks.”[[6]](#footnote-6) French and English listeners of the first three decades of the nineteenth century sensed a likeness between the African musical bow and European instruments of the harp family.

I have begun this prospectus with this constellation of accounts because they are unexpected sonic and timbral qualifiers of the music of the enslaved. These writings provide a sharp antidote to conventional European ideas about African alterity that tied the music-making of the enslaved to non-human entities, for example, by drawing connections to demonic activity and by accounting for this music for its crude, near animalistic shrieks and untrammelled sexual urges found in their “lascivious” dances and their “violently twitched and convulsed” movements.[[7]](#footnote-7) As the only image in Debret’s depictions of slave life in Rio de Janeiro that turns to the world of myth for inspiration, Debret’s “The Old African Orpheus” stands apart from the vast majority of the painter’s ethnographic sketches. Most of these stock images depict graphic scenes of violence ranging from spectacles of public beatings to displays of ravaged black bodies, iron collar punishments, and portrayals of cadaverous, starving slaves at the auction block. It goes without saying that European historical actors rarely portrayed African music-making in such faux-classical or noble light.

What does it mean for us to reconsider this quintessentially Greek myth about the power of music through the lens of transatlantic slavery? Before I return to this question, this initial reading of Debret’s *African Orpheus* calls for an historical overview of what was happening in Rio at the time.

**Metropolitan Reversal**

Less than two decades before the publication of Debret’s travelogue, the city of Rio de Janeiro underwent the most profound transformation of its history. 1808 was the year in which Portuguese officials elected the city as the new headquarter of the Portuguese court and the capital of that empire. The court’s spectacular move took place following the heated month of November 1807, when Napoleon’s first invasion of Portugal threatened the deposition of the Bragança dynasty, an event that resulted in riskiest of monarchical enterprises: the abandonment of the throne. Before the Napoleonic army arrived in Lisbon, the Portuguese Prince Regent D. João VI declared a national state of emergency and set sail towards the capital of its largest colony for solace and shelter, not leaving until 1821. The Prince Regent took with him no fewer than fifteen thousand people and their possessions, including a printing press (for the city had none until then) and some sixty thousand volumes from its prestigious Royal Library, all crammed into eight ships, five frigates and three smaller vessels.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Five years after the court’s arrival, Rio’s population almost doubled to 80,000 people, and the opening of ports in 1808—an important move in the liberalization of trade—meant that the number of ships entering the city quadrupled in one year.[[9]](#footnote-9) For the first time in its history, Rio provided European travellers such as Debret and Walsh with a rare touristic package: an exotic destination populated with African slaves (and undiscovered indigenes in immediate proximity) and a city that offered the latest European luxury goods and cultural fashions, together with the possibility of finding (nearly) home comfort in the familiar opera evenings at the Real Theatro São João, built in 1813.

One contemporaneous commentator even referred to the Prince Regent’s Quinta da Boa Vista Palace as a “tropical Versailles” (also the title of Kirsten Schultz book *Tropical Versailles*).[[10]](#footnote-10) The image of Versailles, as Schultz argues, called to mind a comparable moment in French history—that is, when Louis XIV dislocated the French royal residence from the capital and to its suburb of Versailles, which became a critical place for the centralization of power and the consolidation of French absolute monarchy. The reference to Versailles recalled Louis XIV’s famous interests in architectural and landscape innovation following the move—plus the ensuing sumptuous marble structures, and symmetrically landscaped, immaculate gardens—that have become a signature of Versailles ever since.[[11]](#footnote-11) Most importantly, “Versailles” echoed Louis XIV’s grand efforts of self-representation, where the ritualization of both extraordinary and quotidian events served to spectacularize the absolute authority of the monarchy, establishing its transplantation in divine legitimacy.

It was for the purposes of its transatlantic legitimacy, that Dom João VI hired a group of Parisian men of letters, artists, and architects (most of whom had worked for the Institut de France and who were dismissed with the defeat of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in 1814). The so-called “French Artistic Mission” reached the shores of Guanabara Bay on 26 March 1816, having departed from the French Port of Le Havre weeks earlier.[[12]](#footnote-12) Debret—as well as the composer Sigismund Neukomm, who we will meet in Chapter 1—were among this group. D. João VI’s idea was that the French commission would produce a new official iconography of the Portuguese monarchy, of representations of the Portuguese crown in the form of scenes and sounds where wealth, power and heroism reigned supreme.[[13]](#footnote-13)

The Portuguese royals, not unlike the French, made use of spectacular aesthetic registers and “fantasies of sovereignty” to address their crisis in royal representation.[[14]](#footnote-14) The royal family commissioned musical performances, heroic overtures and allegorical operas with suggestive titles such as the 1809 semi-opera *The Triumph of America* by José Mauricio Nunes Garcia (who we will meet in Chapter 1), which harkened back to a glorious era of Portuguese conquest. In visual art, what came out of the Portuguese alliance with the French were numerous portraits and marble busts of the royal family, depictions of the monarch in grand, gold- and crimson-tinged interior spaces as well as neoclassical figure and landscape paintings.[[15]](#footnote-15)

It is thus not hard to imagine images such as Debret’s “Old African Orpheus”hanging on the walls of the Royal Palace. Debret’s watercolour emblematizes the Portuguese King’s newly found interest in the thought of classical Greece and the Antiquity as he hoped to rebuild his once powerful empire. The King’s principal architectural project—the Imperial School of Fine arts, completed in 1816—also followed a distinctly Greek mould as it featured a Hellenistic portico with a total of six columns plus high pedestals on either end, all made of giant plates of white marble and granite. Men of letters working for D. João VI’s government had already argued that Rio’s citizens must aspire to an arcane Greek polity, with Greece as “the original source of European civilization,” a point that recalled what Winckelmann said many a decade earlier: that “the only way for us to become great, and even inimitable if possible, is to imitate the ancients.”[[16]](#footnote-16)

My point here is to suggest that Debret’s African Orpheus be situated in neoclassical realms. Not only did D. João VI encourage the production of artworks that would look at ancient Greece for inspiration, but Debret had studied with Jacques-Louis David, a proponent of that style, back at the Institut de France. Doing so offers only partial insight into the image’s Orphic undertones—the relationship between musical power, colonial and enslaved subjects. I want to argue that Debret’s “African Orpheus,” together with the Orphic additional listenings we have encountered thus far, put before us at least two avenues of thought. The first considers how Europeans thought of the berimbau as a “simple” instrument that could sound “only three or four notes” or that called to mind a bygone European—“troubadours,” as Debret suggests in a further watercolour, or the sounds of a medieval hammered dulcimer. The idea that the musical bow was a primordial harp of sorts—the “first string instrument”—was popularized in numerous nineteenth-century histories of music emerging at that time. To cite only one example, George Hogarth’s account of the history of string instruments, first published in the English journal *Musical World* of 1836, saw the musical bow as a progenitor of all string instruments, and one that was present in the “rudest states of society.” Hogarth would even cite “an ancient statue of Orpheus holding a violin in one hand and a bow in the other,” only to conclude that the sculpture showed how “slow … the progress of history has been; for, few as these steps are, the first is probably almost coeval with the world, while the last has been taken a little more than two hundred years ago.”[[17]](#footnote-17) Debret and Walsh listened with what the anthropologist Johannes Fabian might call allochronic ears. They perceived the musical bow as an instrument of the archetypal past.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Second: what of the instrument’s sweet, Orphic beauty? The *berimbau* player’s connection to the myth of Orpheus is worth thinking about because it asks us to reconsider the powers that the music of enslaved Africans exerted upon European listeners. The existence of this “African Orpheus” works to reverse the musically colonialist significance of the myth—a subject that in the last decade has prompted intensive musicological dialogue and produced telling accounts of music’s uses in colonial enterprises. Whilst musicologists such as Olivia Bloechl, Vanessa Agnew and Nicholas Till have understood Orpheus to be a conquistador-like character able to pacify Others with the sweet sound of his music (non-human entities and uncivilized humans alike), the Orphic undertones I have listened for here prompts us to consider the agency the music of the colonized had in relation those in power.[[19]](#footnote-19) It is significant, in this sense, that one of our travellers, Walsh, heard the tones of the Welsh “triple harp” in the performance of the berimbau player. (The triple harp had long been associated with the arts of musical persuasion, as in Handel’s *Alexander’s Feast*, when Timotheus’s harp music convinced Alexander the Great to burn the city of Persepolis, or in the same composer’s *Saul*, when David’s “sweet persuasive lyre” soothed the former’s anger.) When Walsh heard the “African Orpheus,” he was in fact making a connection between sound, empathy, and musical persuasion.

It is thus tempting to read the berimbau player as a *preto velho*, the old wise man of Yoruba Umbanda religion whose role was to soothe afflicted souls and to offer life advice and healing remedies. Debret’s watercolour, after all, is only one among the three images of the first half of the nineteenth century that show an elderly man at the instrument. But more than this: the *preto velho* berimbau player, a position reserved to a community’s elderly, most senior members, remains an archetypal figure in Afro-Brazilian mythology. In a memoir, the novelist Bernardo Élis (1915-1997) even wrote he “had in his childhood dreamt of a berimbau of a *preto velho* former slave that was his father’s neighbour. The berimbau was beautiful, mysterious, and the *preto* got out of it effortless melodies, playing it like he was caressing the instrument’s string.”[[20]](#footnote-20) The figure of the “Old African Orpheus”, I am arguing, offers itself as an archetype for the power and agency of the enslaved.

**Rationale**

The contribution of this dissertation is twofold. First, I argue that the radically indeterminate entities presented in this introduction—a tropical Versailles, an African Orpheus—call for a reappraisal of modern notions of musical difference. This is urgent work to be done in the history of the long nineteenth-century, the period often charged with the congealment of West/non-West, centre/periphery binary oppositions. More than two decades ago, Gary Tomlinson placed the blame on a body of mainstream philosophical texts that revered Western music’s capacity for abstraction—whether that involved instrumental music’s purported autonomy from human moral orders or the disembodied nature of musical notation, a detachment from the thing it represents.[[21]](#footnote-21) Tomlinson argued that, as well as sealing musical culture off from the material realities of production, dissemination, and consumption that determined it, philosophical writings on musical abstraction worked to establish Europe’s separateness, its exceptional place in [world] history—right when unprecedented imperial expansion took place. I imagine, however, that claims such as these too often lead postcolonial musical scholarship to a prelapsarian era *before* a despotic time when an absolutist “West” claimed/set itself apart from non-Western European worlds—by looking at the work of those who once showed that European singing could be commensurable with the singing of non-European and could stand as an emblem of our “shared humanity.”[[22]](#footnote-22)

This project seeks to unearth those moments of commensurability in nineteenth-century music history when Europeans understood the practices of colonized groups relationally – not in equivalence, but in alignment with models of alterity that were closer to home.[[23]](#footnote-23) More than this, my chosen case studies seek to engender a critical reappraisal of the hierarchically-weighted binary oppositions (centre/periphery, Western/non-Western) embedded in the vast majority of contemporary writings on colonialism. In this sense, I argue that the impromptu flight of the Portuguese Prince Regent and his court to the colony launched a process of “metropolitan reversal”: that is, the entrenchment of a European metropolis, together with its systems of governance and cultural practices, in the colony. The 1808 transfer of the Portuguese court placed into question the political, economic, and cultural hierarchies that were established by more than three centuries of European colonialism. What took place was an unprecedented feat in the history of modern empires—never before had a European monarch set foot in a colony, let alone governed from it.

The transfer of the court denaturalized Brazil’s status as a colony and heralded the end of Portugal’s once successful colonial system—the oldest European empire. Indeed, Brazil outgrew its former colonizer through the course of the nineteenth century. Less than two decades after the Prince Regent’s transfer to Rio, a severe political crisis—the Liberal Revolution of 1820—called the Court back to Lisbon, a return that on the other end led to the Brazilian independence in 1822, or a loss of Portugal’s largest and most prosperous colony. The transfer of the court to Rio exacerbated Portugal’s status as a peripheral European empire (a “semi-periphery” or a “Calibanized Prosperous,” as Boaventura de Sousa Santos has suggested).[[24]](#footnote-24) Upon its return to Lisbon thirteen years after arriving in Brazil, the king was not only caught between the contradictions of an *ancien régime* and a rising bourgeois order but encountered a lost, starving and largely illiterate people with no governance. The Portuguese decline was such that by the late nineteenth century a renowned politician wrote that “The Portuguese society resembles a group of slaves that, indifferent, inert, and half-naked, watch the bartering of the price for which they should be sold, caring little whether they are the property of this or that lord, just waiting humbly for their meagre sustenance.”[[25]](#footnote-25) The case of the nineteenth century Portuguese empire, to put it simply, calls into question the idea of a monolithic West, or that “empire is something the ‘West’ does to the ‘non-West.’”[[26]](#footnote-26)

Second, this dissertation makes a historiographic intervention by demonstrating that so-called colonial “margins” were a central source and wellspring for the reproduction of European musical canons. They were not mere “backwaters” of European history or examples of poor or second-hand music-making. Existing studies of colonial music-making almost exclusively post a delay between the progressive life of the metropolitan centre and that of its peripheries. They fall foul of what of Homi Bhabha calls “colonial mimicry,” that author’s critique of the colonial dilemma which suggests that colonized subjects mimic their colonizers in order to obtain the same rights and privileges they have. The colony is configured, according to Bhabha’s diagnosis, as “almost the same [as the metropolitan centre], but not quite”—that colony ultimately loses track of the “originality” and the “monumentality” of its metropolitan European centre.[[27]](#footnote-27) In the dominant view, “the original” and “the authentic” are articulated and maintained as uniquely European domains.

For example, Cristina Magaldi’s 2004 *Music in Imperial Rio de Janeiro: European Culture in a Tropical Milieu*—at the moment the sole English-language monograph on nineteenth-century music in Rio—argues that the 1808 transfer of the Portuguese court to the city encouraged Rio’s new elites and middle classes to imitate the “imported musical styles” that arrived *en masse* from Europe, in particular from Paris.[[28]](#footnote-28) The words of German painter Johann Moritz Rugendas (in Brazil from 1822 to 1825) illustrate Magaldi’s point:

The foreigner cannot help but feel appalled to encounter, in the midst of such a grand and original nation, the same shabbiness of the European society. Thus, for example, it is not a pleasant view to the [European] artist to see the people walking around, as it is very common here … dressed in the latest fashion from Paris or London.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Dress was not the only sign of colonial belatedness. For Magaldi, the exponential proliferation of piano transcriptions of orchestral and operatic works in the first half of the century, one of the main ways Cariocas encountered the European classics, makes the point clear: soirée piano-and-voice performances of Bellini’s “Casta Diva,” perhaps performed by two sisters in a facilitated arrangement, offered a glimpse of the “real” music; yet these recitals were lacking in European musical “soul.” “Factors such as the music’s originality and authenticity in performance,” Magaldi laments, “were not critical issues for Cariocas.”[[30]](#footnote-30)

But what if we look at nineteenth-century Brazilian musical practices not for what they fell short of, or what they missed, but for their productive potential? I aim to reconsider this idea that nineteenth-century Rio was a “Parisian façade,” a city whose glamour could never match that of European capitals, via a closer examination of Schultz’s own critical lexicon. Schultz demonstrates that Portuguese government officials recognized that the colony could offer more than raw materials—sugar, coffee, and gold—for European extraction and consumption, that it could provide a healthy space—a green haven of sorts—for the political, economic, and moral, regeneration of the Portuguese monarchy.[[31]](#footnote-31) Portuguese commentators framed the Court’s arrival in the colony as a “fortunate union” that would not only “make the most of disaster” but generate peace, prosperity, and harmony. The Prince Regent, as one commentator wrote, would “endear himself even more with his vassals on both sides of the Atlantic, to make himself loved by men, to be a model prince, to gain a great reputation in this manner.” They spoke of Brazil’s “affluence,” “vitality” and “potency.” The Portuguese, as royal secretary Luís Joaquim Marrócos dos Santos wrote in 1808, could and should develop “stronger roots” in their colony. America was a distant, safe harbor when compared to Portugal’s “wretched,” deteriorating European capital filled with decadent aristocrats and struck by poverty and even famine upon the Portuguese rushed departure.[[32]](#footnote-32)

This dissertation ponders what it might mean to consider such regenerative or reproductive politics under the light of music-making. My case studies show that examining the relationship between music and these forms of knowledge production asks that we supplement musicology’s prevailing focus on musical representation with case studies that pay attention to practice. While this might refer to the recurring labour of embodied performances and ritual activity, I am also interested in how music and dance became notorious for their contagious and infective potential. In particular, white audiences developed crazes for African and Afro-Brazilian musics in ways that occurred in tandem with the tendency of criminal law and the periodical press to highlight the dangerous powers of such musics. I am concerned, then, not in *that* non-European worlds constituted European knowledge but I aim to take a closer look at *how* this knowledge was formed, which requires taking pause at sites of production themselves.

Finally, I want to counterpose such cumulative politics with the unfortunate yet persistent image of Brazilian archives in flames. I am referring to the fire of the Real Theatro de São João which was burnt to the ground in 1839 and took with it a whole archive of stage settings, musical instruments, and materials belonging to European opera companies. Thousands of legal documents pertaining to the history of slavery (stored in Rio’s Ministry of the Treasury) were also burnt in 1890 under the order of politician Rui Barbosa, who believed that the burning of documents would prevent previous slave-owners from receiving compensation for the loss of their slaves after abolition. And more recently, recall the 2018 fire of Museu Nacional—the building that acted as the Royal Family’s Quinta da Boa Vista Palace—the very *Tropical Versailles* with which I began. Twenty million archival items were lost in the fire.

Chapter 1, “Haydn’s Spirits”, takes a look at music’s regenerative politics, or music’s role in moral and religious regeneration during the stay of the Portuguese court in Rio de Janeiro (1808-1821). This is precisely when Western music, and in particular Viennese classicism, is thought to have “arrived”: it is a watershed, even a “primal” moment of Brazilian music history. This chapter offers a reassessment of the musical personae and practices of Dom João VI’s Royal Court: first, I look at the Austrian composer Sigismund Neukomm, who landed in Rio with this troupe as part of the “French Artistic Mission,” and has gained fame ever since as Haydn’s prodigal “son.” The second figure is the Afro-Brazilian composer and priest José Mauricio Nunes Garcia, made chapel master of the Royal Chapel until 1811—and who became known especially after his death in 1830 as the Brazilian Haydn, and later even as a Brazilian Mozart.

I suggest Neukomm and José Mauricio can be read as two of Haydn’s surrogates—living individuals that act as stand-ins or replacements for canonical figures lost to absence or death, as Joseph Roach would call them.[[33]](#footnote-33) I draw together stories of how José Mauricio channelled Haydn’s spirits with the former composer’s representation of the divine creation or the “biblical sublime”—a setting of Haydn’s “And there was light!” theme from *The Creation*, which I consider to be a musical memorial to that composer. The idea is not to read José Mauricio’s music against or in comparison to Haydn’s “original,” but to demonstrate how practices of Haydn memorialization (a biography dedicated to his memory is another) worked to surrogate the composer, to keep him alive in his death. In addition, this chapter aims to take seriously the idea that Haydn was the “father of instrumental music” (to my knowledge something that musicology has dismissed as mere biographical detail) as to reassess the persistent connections between the figures of the great composer, the divine creator, and the father.

My central chapter, “Orpheus in Hell,” turns to musical and dance practices associated with moral degeneration and the contagion of the social body. It picks up in the 1830s, where I begin by looking at how the *lundu*—the first dance of African influence to become a staple of white urban entertainment in Brazilian comic musical theatre—associated black characters with "infectious" African rhythms and hypersexualized dance gestures. I show how *lundu* dance scenarios—together with the song collections that circulated freely in Rio’s newspapers and magazines—elicited discourses of "black peril," or imagined black male desire for white Brazilian women. The *umbigada*—a dance gesture borrowed from Central African traditions, and which showed a brief encounter between the dancer’s belly bumps—was the main culprit in the century’s middle decades.

The second part of this chapter shifts towards to an 1868 parody of Jacques Offenbach’s *Orphée aux enfers*, the brazilianized *Orpheo na roça*, or *Orpheus in the Countryside*. I am interested in how Carioca performers replaced (even surrogated) the *can-can* of the *galope infernale* with *umbigadas*, leading the satirical press to also see them as interchangeable gestures. My point is to reveal how comic opera audiences understood difference relationally, or how they likened notions of African hypersexuality with ideas about Western European female degradation, embodied by the French theatre dancers arriving freshly from Paris, or that they understood difference relationally.

Chapter 3, “Instruments of Resistance”, returns to the Orphic *berimbau* that began this dissertation, but from the decade of 1860. This chapter examines how *berimbau* performances in Rio de Janeiro’s public streets—once musical *cartes de visite* of an aspiring cosmopolitan city—now acted as keystones of slave resistance movements. This was the time when the *berimbau* acquired a leading role in the martial art of capoeira. I look at the material modifications that promoted the *berimbau*’s role in collective (as opposed to solo) music-making, before considering a more radical transfiguration: the idea, kept alive in the oral narratives of Afro-Brazilian *pretos velhos*, that the instrument could be used as a weapon against police brutality.

This chapter finishes with a Black Atlantic analysis of slave resistance. It considers the implications of these novel *berimbau* performances to what are now leading theories of slave and black resistance, which also began to grain traction at the dawn of the century in the United States. I am interested in how the “slave sublime” of the African American spiritual tradition engendered such a powerful discursive model for imagining the resistance of the enslaved. I argue that *berimbau* performances offer critical alternatives to an enduring Romantic “sublime” model that binds the notion of the struggle (political and expressive) to “pure” vocal utterance, that is, to the realm of the absolute and the ineffable—in a way that is abstracted from human action. Capoeira is a worthy case study because it blends elements of self-defence, acrobatics, ritual activity, dance, and music-making as to blur the distinction between musical or expressive practice and social practice.

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1. Jean-Baptiste Debret, *Viagem Pitoresca e Histórica ao Brasil*, [1834-9] trans./ed. Sérgio Milliet

   (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora, 1975). Debret reported to have painted the image in 1826. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The round structure at the instrument’s lower end, most probably a resonating gourd, characterizes it as a predecessor of the *berimbau*, which would later in the nineteenth century become the leading instrument of the martial art of capoeira. See Richard Graham, “Technology and Culture Change: The Development of the “Berimbau” in Colonial Brazil,” *Latin American Music Review*, 12/1, 1-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Debret, *Viagem Pitoresca e Histórica ao Brasil*, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. L. F. de Tollenare, *Notas Dominicais* (Recife: Governo do Estado de Pernambuco, Secretaria da Cultura, 1978), 137; Walsh, Robert, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, Vol. II (London: Frederick Westley and A. H. Davis, 1830), 176. For James Wetherell’s commentary, see Richard Graham, “Technology and Culture Change: The Development of the “Berimbau” in Colonial Brazil,” *Latin American Music Review*, 12/1 (1991), 1-20, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Walsh, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, 176. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Dominant European characterization of African and Afro-Brazilian musics brought attention to uncivil tempers, collective rowdiness, the slaves’ crude, out-of-tune singing and not least, the sexual excess that emanated from their indecorously dancing bodies. Debret himself, in another encounter with slave musics in Rio, spoke of how blacks “of a more barbarous nation … contended themselves with merely clapping their hands together in perfect unison without music or words.” See Mary Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 233. Another classic example is Robertson’s 1808 account of how, “with a shriek or a song, [the slaves] rushed in and joined the dance. The musicians played a louder and more discordant music; the dancers, reinforced by the auxiliaries mentioned, gathered fresh animation; the auxiliaries themselves seemed wrapped in all the furor of demons.” Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro,* 244. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Lilia Schwarcz provides a magisterial account of the transfer of the court and discusses the Portuguese Royal Library’s journey to Brazil in Chapter 6 of *A Longa Viagem da Biblioteca dos Reis* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2002), 186-224. For analyses of the ways in which the printing press transformed Brazilian media history, see in particular Isabel Lustosa, *Insultos Impressos: A Guerra dos Jornalistas da Independência* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000) and Marco Morel, *As Transformações dos Espaços Públicos (Imprensa, Atores Políticos e Sociabilidades na Cidade Imperial (1820-1840)* (São Paulo: Editora Hucitec, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See Chapter 1 of Emília Viotti da Costa, *Da Monarquia a Repúblia: Momentos Decisivos* (São Paulo: UNESP, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Kirsten Schultz, *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and the Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821* (New York and London: Routledge, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Versailles also serves, as Schutz suggests, to evoke “a recent monarchical past that had its political leadership and sovereignty challenged and was torn asunder by revolution,” foreshadowing the impending end of Portugal’s own absolute monarchy upon its return to Portugal in 1821. Schultz, *Tropical Versailles*, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. This is reported in *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*,No. 28 (6 April 1816), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Whilst those hired from the Institut de France have been nicknamed the French Artistic Mission, recent scholarship has suggested that its ‘mission’ denomination wrongly emphasizes the group’s civilizing aims over its principal purpose of royal self-representation. See Lilia Schwarcz, *O Sol do Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Bloechl, Olivia, *Opera and the Political Imaginary in Old Regime France* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017), x. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See the first chapter of Schwarcz, *O Sol do Brasil*; and for an English-language account of the French expedition in Brazil, see Ana Lucia Araujo, *Brazil Through French Eyes: A Nineteenth-Century Artist in the Tropics* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. José da Silva Lisboa, *Constituição Moral* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1824), 6. Johann Joachim Winckelmann, “Thoughts on the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks” in H. B. Nisbet, *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Schiller and Goethe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. *The Musical World*, 22/2 (1836), 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See Olivia Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-31; Vanessa Agnew, *Enlightenment Orpheus: The Power of Music in Other Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); and Nicholas Till, “Orpheus Conquistador,” in Pamela Karantonis and Dylan Robinson (eds.), *Opera Indigene: Re/Presenting First Nations and Indigenous Cultures* (London: Ashgate, 2011), 15-30. “Never to my knowledge,” has Olivia Bloechl suggested in her account of the myth in the seventeenth-century “is Orpheus confused with the beings he charms.” [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Bernardo Élis, *Bernardo Élis: Memórias* (São Paulo: Abril Educação, 1983), 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See Gary Tomlinson, “Musicology, Anthropology, History,” *Il Saggiatore musicale* 8/1 (2001), 21-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. I am thinking in particular about two key texts that consider music-making in relation to the Americas in the early modern period: Gary Tomlinson’s *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and Olivia Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music*, xiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Boaventura de Sousa Santos, “Between Prospero and Caliban: Colonialism, Postcolonialism, and Inter-Identity,” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 39/2 (2002), 9-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. See João Silva, *Entertaining Lisbon: Music, Theater, and Modern Life in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 26. It is also worth noting that the heavy Portuguese presence in the early decades of the century had a profound influence on the development of Brazilian national sovereignty. By 1822, for example, Brazil could barely declare itself free from Portuguese reins. Whilst the Prince Regent D. João VI returned to his European homeland in 1821, his rebellious son D. Pedro I refused his father’s orders to return to Portugal and shortly after declared Brazilian independence on the margins of the Ipiranga river on September 22. Brazil, in other words, went from being an absolute monarchy to acquiring a republican status without a war of independence. As a result of this, Brazilian historians have often understood independence to be a result of internal conflict within the Portuguese monarchy, between a proponent of absolutism and a liberal-leaning son, rather than as a result of a unifying nation’s struggle for independence—a hallmark of modern democracy. See Roberto DaMatta, *Relativizando: Uma Introdução a Antropologia Social* (Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 1987). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Gavin Williams makes this point in his “Review: Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan, eds., *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique*,” *Twentieth-Century Music*, 15/1 (2018), 137-143. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994). The notion of “colonial mimicry” is already to be found in the work of Levi Strauss, who believed he saw nothing but “impoverished imitations of his own [European culture]” after his 1959 voyage to Brazil. The influential literary critic Roberto Schwarz summarized the Brazilian malaise when he wrote of a “Father Christmas sporting an eskimo outfit in a tropical climate and, for traditionalists, the electric guitar in the land of samba.” See Roberto Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture*, transl. Linda Briggs (London and New York: Verso, 1992), 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Cristina Magaldi, *Music in Imperial Rio de Janeiro: European Culture in a Tropical Milieu* (Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Magaldi, *Music in Imperial Rio de Janeiro*, x. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *Ibid*., 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. The “transplantation” or the “enrooting” of the court acts for Schultz as an informal precedent of the official Portuguese nationalist project of Regeneration that took place in the 1850s and that sought to reconstitute that nation by fostering economic growth via an adoption of liberal ideologies and industrialization. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Schultz also considers Marrócos’s claim that his Brazilian wife was “better than many Portuguese women” to argue that the colony promised the Portuguese with an opportunity for ‘moral renewal’, too—as the Portuguese moved away from a “land of vice and perdition” and the “superficiality and decadence of European aristocrats.” The idea of moral regeneration, in particular in relation to female sexuality, is explored in more detail in Chapter 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)