

**EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES AND RESIGNIFICATIONS OF THE RURAL
CABAÇAIS BANDS: DECOLONIAL ATTITUDES IN THE
URBAN/CONTEMPORARY MUSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

***PRÁTICAS EDUCATIVAS E RESSIGNIFICAÇÕES DOS SABERES E FAZERES DAS
BANDAS CABAÇAIS RURAIS: AÇÕES DECOLONIAIS NO CONTEXTO MUSICAL
URBANO/CONTEMPORÂNEO***

***PRÁCTICAS EDUCATIVAS Y RESIGNIFICACIONES DEL CONOCIMIENTO Y
HACER DE BANDAS DE PÍFANOS: ACCIONES DESCOLONIALES EN EL
CONTEXTO MUSICAL URBANO/CONTEMPORÂNEO***

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ABSTRACT: The traditional Cabaçais Bands, also called Pífanos Bands, hegemonically constituted by men, are instrumental music groups which have existed in Brazilian Northeast since the colonial period. Linked to popular catholicism, they do not dispense opportunities to free their Brazilianness from capitalist dungeons, which, among other things, deny plurality, silence knowledge, do not recognize other educational practices and condemn to anonymity and forgetfulness everything which do not contemplates the standards imposed by the modernity project. Nowadays, however, these groups and their masters have received attention from urban musicians, academic researchers, and cultural managers, so that collective and individual musical new musical projects have emerged in all Brazilian states, having the Cabaçais Bands as a referential of musical knowledge, practices and other ways of existing in a social reality. This qualitative research, therefore, highlights some musicians experiences to understand how they and other musicians learn, transmit and give new meaning to the cabaçal music bands. We hope the examples in evidence here, collected by WhatsApp, inspire, and arouse interest of many other musicians in music bands focused here.

KEYWORDS: Education. Cabaçais Bands. Educational practices. Popular culture.

RESUMO: *As Bandas Cabaçais, também chamadas de Bandas de Pífanos³, são grupos musicais de tradição rural existentes no Nordeste brasileiro desde o período colonial. Hegemonicamente constituídas por homens e vinculadas ao catolicismo popular, não dispensam oportunidades para profanar e libertar a brasilidade das masmorras capitalistas que negam a pluralidade, silenciam saberes, não reconhecem práticas educativas outras e condenam ao esquecimento tudo o que rompe com os padrões impostos pelo projeto de*

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³ The fife is a rustic transverse flute made of bamboo, pvc, aluminum etc. It has six holes for typing and one for blowing. The musician who performs it is called a pifeiro.



modernidade colonialista. Na contemporaneidade, contudo, esses grupos têm recebido olhares por parte de músicos urbanos, pesquisadores e produtores culturais, cujos trabalhos têm contribuído para o surgimento de projetos que ressignificam o fazeres populares tendo as Bandas Cabaçais como fontes de saberes e modos outros de existirem. Neste trabalho de cunho qualitativo, destacamos experiências de algumas musicistas para compreendermos por quais práticas educativas elas e outros/as novos/as pifeiros/as urbanos aprendem, transmitem, aprendem e ressignificam a cultura cabaçal. A coleta dos dados se deu através de entrevistas pelo whatsapp. Esperamos que os exemplos em tela inspirem e despertem o interesse de muitos outros(as) musicistas pela arte cabaçal.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Educação. Banda Cabaçal. Práticas educativas. Cultura popular.

RESUMEN: *Las Bandas Cabaçais, también llamadas Bandas de Pifanos, constituidas hegemonicamente por hombres, son grupos de música que existen en el Nordeste desde la época colonial. Vinculados al catolicismo popular, no precinden oportunidades para profanar y liberar la brasileña de las mazmorras capitalistas, que, entre otras cosas, niegan la pluralidad, silencian el conocimiento, no reconocen otras prácticas educativas y condenan al anonimato y al olvido todo lo que rompe los estándares impuestos. Por el proyecto de modernidad traída por los colonizadores. Hoy, sin embargo, estos grupos y sus Maestros han recibido la atención de músicos urbanos, investigadores y productores culturales, cuyas obras han contribuido al surgimiento de proyectos colectivos e individuales que toman las prácticas de las Bandas Cabaçais como fuentes de conocimiento, prácticas y otras formas de existir culturalmente. Este estudio cualitativo, por lo tanto, destaca algunas experiencias narradas por algunas instrumentistas para entender por qué prácticas educativas aprenden, transmiten, aprenden y dan un nuevo significado a las bandas cabaçais. La recolección de datos se realizó a través de conversaciones en whatsapp. Esperamos que los ejemplos en lienzo inspiren y despierten el interés de muchas otras personas por el arte de la calabaza.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: Educación. Banda Cabaçal. Práticas educativas. Cultura popular.

Introduction

It is essential to open other paths, show that it is possible to walk through the gaps, share possibilities of other stories.

Belijane Marques Feitos (2021)⁴

The Cabaçais Bands, also known, among other terms, as Fife and Zabumba Bands, are spread across the states of Bahia, Sergipe, Alagoas, Pernambuco, Paraíba, Ceará and North of Minas Gerais. These groups, which date back to colonial Brazil, have uses and functions linked to popular Catholicism and, with some exceptions, have their activities limited to the rural

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context, appearing mainly in novenas⁵ carried out as payment for promises made with the sacred. In some cases, there are even bands that play only on the day of the saint venerated by their Mestre or by some other faithful in their neighborhood. As Silva (2011, p. 70, our translation) explains, Portuguese Catholicism:

[...] brought us a series of traditions and festivities that built our calendar, bequeathing us celebrations such as the Bumba-meu-boi that took place in Maranhão, Reisado, Cavalhada, Marujada, Chegança, Auto Natalino, Carnival, June Festivals and so many others, where some were consolidated as typical musicalities in some Northeastern states [...].

In this religious musical context, with a traditional repertoire composed of blessed, waltzes, marches and baião, transmitted from generation to generation and classified by the fife players as the *music of the beginning of the world or as the music of the indians*⁶, Cabaçais are relegated to anonymity. In its constitution there are European, indigenous, African and Arab elements, making them a hybrid Brazilian product. With two fifes, a zabumba and a war chest, these groups are also characterized by having a predominantly male formation. Women, in some cases, play an effective role in the making of the bands' uniforms and, in all other situations, in the preparation of breakfast, lunch and dinner for the musicians and for the people who appear on the prayer day, whose organization is also a female responsibility.

Through our incursions into the universe of the fife from Paraíba, we have noticed that the number of rural Cabaçais Bands has drastically reduced, revealing, among other things, that the new generations have not given importance to this heritage that once had great prestige in their communities. Faced with this reality, already enchanted by everything we had already experienced with the gourds, we decided to intervene in favor of the dynamization of the remaining groups in the Paraíba Hinterlands. One of the strategies was to introduce some in the programming of events held in the academic context and, above all, by institutions that promote culture, inside and outside the state. Another action that generated good results was the distribution of fifes among instrumentalist friends. The intention was to awaken views from the outside to the Cabaçal universe that could influence, among family members and communities of fife players in general, new understandings in relation to Cabaçais. These onslaughts also enabled us to make contact with bands, musicians, producers and researchers from other states;

⁵ Novenas are events in which a saint is prayed for nine days, nine hours or nine weeks. In the context of gourds, prayers are held for nine days.

⁶ Expressions taken from a testimony for Braga (2015), transcribed in the book *Celebrações da Vida: História e Memória da Banda Cabaçal Os Inácios*. This book is the result of your master's research..

and it was precisely on this path that we learned of the existence throughout Brazil of an expressive urban musical artistic movement around the fife culture.

The WhatsAap Pífano Livre Brasil group, with more than 150 participants, including masters, professional and amateur musicians, researchers and producers of popular culture, revealed to us that, while Cabaçal was taking its first steps on the streets of some cities in Paraíba, the fifes were no longer new on the asphalt of Fortaleza, Rio de Janeiro, Teresina, Norte de Minas, Florianópolis, São Paulo, Brasília and many other cities in the Brazilian states. That's when we got to know musical projects such as: *Pifarada Urbana* - Fortaleza - CE, *Caju Pinga Fogo Teresina* - PI, *Trem de Doido* - Minas Gerais, *Mestre Zé do Pife* and *Juvelinas*, from Brasília, and the Carnival blocks from Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Recife and Brasília. It was even these blocks that inspired the foundation, in João Pessoa, of the carnival block of fife, *Avuô*.

With this contemporary movement involving researchers, cultural producers and music artists, the traditional gourds gained more visibility, so that there has been a growing number of instrumentalists, professionals and amateurs, spread across Brazil, who learn, resignify and link the knowledge, practices and instrumentation of their educational and artistic activities. Spiritually “fifitized”⁷, these people started to develop individual and collective activities due to the dissemination of the Cabaçais Bands and the definitive insertion, above all, of the fife, in the urban cultural context. In this new panorama, the female presence has broken with the patriarchal tradition and also assumed the fife or some other instrument of traditional gourd percussion. In this movement, men and women, in the same boat, gave rise to what we call urban fife players.

The fife gains the asphalt through the practices experienced by urban fife players

[...] Sometimes you think you are going to learn to play the fife as a hobby, but it can save your life.

Kika Brandão (2020)⁸

Among other aspects experienced by the traditional Cabaçais Bands, we highlight some practices, including educational, experienced in the urban context mentioned above in the light of Brandão (2013) when pointing out that in one way, or many, we are involved in different educational processes to learn, teach, learn-teach, know, do, be or to live with. In his view, education has the mission of transforming subjects and worlds into something better. In this way, we selected excerpts from conversations we had, through WhatsApp, with our urban fife players

⁷ Neologismo para indicar estado de encantamento.

⁸ Fala extraída de conversa de Kika Brandão em live realizada e publicada no instagram @tremdedoido_, no dia 25 set. 2020.

friends Tauana Queiroz, Rafaela Abreu, Vitória do Pife and Dani Neri, in order to understand how the cabaçal training transformed the practices and way of being of each one. The text also highlights how they learn, teach, give new meanings, open up lights for the gourd culture and make it a fundamental component in the contemporary cultural scene of their communities.

Tauana Queiroz and Rafaela Abreu: giving new meaning to cabaçal percussion in Teresina - PI

The ancestry and potency of pife is felt within us, that's why the typical sound transports us inland, to the root of where we came from. Tauana Queiroz (10 mar. 2021).

I think our role as an urban fife band is to increasingly direct the eyes of our audience towards this culture that is still very much alive.. Rafaela Abreu (12 mar. 2021).

It was through our friend Léo Mesquita, urban fife player from Piauí, that in March 2021, through WhatsApp, we met *zabumba* player, singer and composer Tauana Queiroz and researcher, dancer, interpreter and percussionist Rafaela Abreu. Initially, I received positive confirmation from both of them that they would agree to talk about their experiences with the gourd culture. Excerpts from his speeches appear throughout this text, highlighted in italics. Considering the non-existence of the *cabaçal* tradition in Piauí, according to Léo, we started by asking the two of them how it was then that *cabaçal* music arrived for them and how they both dialogued with this tradition that came from other places. Based on their answers, the first contacts with traditional groups were through Maguim do Pífano, musician who created the band Caju Pinga Fogo, of which both are percussionists. Maguim brought as a first reference the Banda de Fífano de Caruaru, led by Mestre Bianco. This band, for Rafaela, is her starting point – which will always be the arrival point, given the grandeur of the work and the strength of a creation capable of changing the history of Brazilian music based on the notoriety made possible by the *Tropicalismo* of the album *Expresso 2222*, recorded in 1972 by Philips Records, whose repertoire includes the song *Pipoca Moderna*, by Mestre Sebastião Bianco, written by Caetano Veloso and recorded by Gilberto Gil in the aforementioned album.

In addition to the Bianco family band, Tauana and Rafaela expanded their lenses to so many other equally valuable ones, especially the *Irmãos Aniceto*, *Zabé da Loca*, *Banda Dois Irmãos*, *Princesa do Agreste* and *Banda Zé do Estado*. Added to these traditional works, some non-traditional groups also made the percussionists look to the *Pife Muderno* led by flutist Carlos Malta and for the band from Brasília *Mestre Zé do pife e as Juvelinas*.

When we talked about the process of learning cabaçal music, given the lack of traditional groups in the territory of Piauí, Tauana told us that he had never studied percussion before with the band *Caju Pinga Fogo*. His learning process followed one of the main methodologies experienced by traditional fife players, that is, learning by playing in a group, both during rehearsals and during presentations. Seeing other musicians in action, above all, playing *zabumba*, including *zabumba* players from the gourds taken as references, was one of the other learning strategies.

About the Cabaçal sound, the percussionist understands that it was certainly already in her auditory memory. For her, those from the Northeast recognize her sound, make assimilations, even if they are not familiar with the instruments. From then on, interest in research arose, and it was:

[...] together with the theoretical and sound research, whether consuming phonographic, audiovisual, or oral content, we went into the peculiarities of rhythms, dynamics, compositional modes, touches of each instrument that make up the basis of a traditional fife band. From there, we were naturally encouraged to mix our contemporary experiences with the original and traditional ones to create our own compositions, with references from our place and time (TAUANA, 10 mar. 2021).

Even with the physical and spatial distance from the reality of traditional bands, these experiences made the percussionists realize the power of cabaçal music. For the *zabumba* player with wonderful voice and compositions, *it's beautiful to discover so much, in what to the inattentive may seem like a simple musical formation*. Tauana understands that the purpose of a Fife Band is to perpetuate a lifestyle, traditions of a people, the reach and capacity for representation that the fife has. For her, these bands have power in creation, experimentalism, daring and unique and ingenious improvisations, which are immortalized in their melodies, behavior, reflections on the reality of the northeastern people and the relationship between man and nature. This type of relationship, as recalled by José Jorge de Carvalho, announced by Antônio Bispo (2015), proposes an alternative model of society based on the biointeraction common to quilombola communities, terreiros of African origin and to Pindoram peoples.

Regarding the female presence in urban groups, Tauana was emphatic in saying that nowadays, although women have more autonomy and occupied social spaces that were previously denied to them, *it is still not easy to call oneself an artist*. Rafaela, in turn, understands that:

[...] the female presence appears in a very natural way as happened with the Juvelinas, who play together with Mestre Zé do fife. They met during classes and workshops that Zé do Pife was giving at the University of Brasília and now they have a group. And that's about it, culture is something changeable and it changes over time, with the various interactions with each individual (RAFAELA, 12 Mar. 2021).

These changes, common to cultural hybridism processes, become much more present nowadays with the advent of the internet. If Cabaçal Band was already born as a hybrid, the redefinition of its knowledge and practices, above all, outside the traditional rural context, acquired a forceful dynamic in promoting the emergence of other sound aesthetics that reveal the dialogue between rural Cabaçal and so-called urban music. Tauana, faced with this reality, believes that it is not possible to reproduce the original language of the fife. For her, this is because they belong to an urban youth, constituted by other ways of being and being in the world. She explains it to us by saying:

We don't have the experience to dialogue with the fife culture with the same truth that people who live in the interior where the tradition arose do. Nor do I believe that this is something that can be acquired, neither with time nor with study. This understanding makes possible the dialogue between the traditional and the non-traditional (TAUANA, 10 mar. 2021).

It is also in this sense of reorganization that Rafaela refers to the meeting between Mestre Zé do Pife and the musicians of the band *As Juvelinas*. In this case, both he and they reorganized musically. For the Master, the new group is a (re)existence strategy. For them, an opening to other ways of experimenting and producing musical and extra-musical knowledge that break away from the purely academic.

Based on the thinking of percussionists from Piauí, the practices and knowledge of the Masters and Masters of popular culture gain appreciation, respect and the possibility of reinterpretation in different contexts, such as Caruaru, where Vitória do Pife lives.

Educational practices gourds that constitute the fife player and educator Vitória do Pife

[...] every sound is good, but the sound of a pife band touches me to the core of my soul. Vitória do Pife (4 abr. 2021).

Vitória do Pife is a young artist from the city of Caruaru – PE. The interest in talking to her came from a live she participated on instagram @bandaavuo. In the same way we did with Tauana and Rafaela, we talked about our work and asked her if she would accept a conversation specifically about her artistic and professional making from the fife. With her approval, even for

us to publish, we talked a little on WhatsApp and then she sent us a report about her history with this instrument. Excerpts from her text are also highlighted here.

Unlike the people from Piauí highlighted above, Vitória do Pife from Caruaru, although not belonging to a cabaçal family, had her musical making started directly with the fife and a traditional Mestre. At 17 years old, she asked her father for an instrument who, working in a bakery next to the São João do Pife workshop, found it easy to meet his daughter's request by buying her a fife. As Vitória told us, she began to attend Mestre's workshop accompanied by friends who at the time also turned their eyes to the fife bands. Let's see what she told us about these first gourd experiences:

[...] Initially I asked him to teach me a certain song. He played for me to hear. Then he played slower so I could try to repeat the movements he was doing. As I couldn't, he played a little slower. After that I asked him to play again, filmed and studied at home. When I was already playing the song, I would go back there to show him and repeat the process with a new song. [...] We used to go there frequently and even started a little band, to which Seu João would lend the instruments and the rehearsals took place in his workshop. For personal reasons, unfortunately, the band did not succeed (VITÓRIA DO PIFE, 04 Apr. 2021).

As can be seen, as usually happens within traditional groups, Vitória learned to play through observation and playing together with Mestre. Youtube helped in this process, as it has also helped some Masters and their young people who are interested in the art that their elders produce. Her first band did not succeed, but, even so, she did not leave the company of the instrument, because, already in her first experiences with the fife, she *felt touched in the heart*. Jorge Larrosa (2020) would say that she experienced these events. For him, experience is what touches us, crosses us, makes sense to us, just as happened with Vitória do Pife when experiencing the fife.

For this young woman, the pife was never a toy or a hobby, but rather an instrument that soon became synonymous with life, joy, peace, love, friendship, survival and, therefore, symbolic. BOFF (1998) explains to us that the term symbolic means to throw things so that they stay together. Hence, in the name of popular culture, Vitória clung to the fife and associate it with the work of circus friends who toiled on crosswalks, in the center of Caruaru and on urban buses.

Still in 2017, already wanting more, he started to attend the fife classes held at the *Casa do Pife* located at the Caruaru Railway Station. Another important strategy in the learning process was to join the Caruaru Fife Orchestra, where she learned much more during performances alongside masters such as: *Peba do Pife, Edmilson do Pifano, João do Pife,*

Marcos do Pife, Zau do Pife, Biu do Pife, Antônio do Pífano, Vavá do Pife and *banda Zé do Estado*. Com this team of stars played alongside Elba Ramalho and the jazz player from Pernambuco, Alexandre Rodrigues, who is also a fife player and fife luthier

Vitória's maturity enabled the engagement of her artistic practice, resulting in the creation, with some friends, of the *Camoranas* group, with which they performed in streets, banks and public squares. According to the fife player, this musical project highlighted the female empowerment in the artistic milieu. It was the fife saying that females also have a place in the Cabaçal Band, as Zabé da Loca, from Pernambuco who came to Paraíba as a child, proved. Zabé lived and died at the age of 93 in rural Monteiro. And it is precisely the Zabé da Loca pipe, Master's reference for a traditional fife, which makes Vitória do Pife think about gender equality and feel the sense of responsibility in her affirmation of her identity. That's why I'm proud to emphasize that the fife today represents her livelihood. For her, it is always important to highlight the female representation and the importance of the *positioning of women in cultural spaces, as women are also the voice of the people and say a lot about history, unfortunately little told*. Hegemonically, the fifes of the traditional Cabaçais Bands are performed by men, so for Vitória do Pife to be the only female member of the Banda de Fífanos in Caruaru is a paradigm shift. On this question she adds:

I don't feel different, I just feel encouraged, more and more to do what I love. Regardless of my gender, regardless of the genre that presents itself, what matters is all this mystique. I say that, but in practice we face palpable difficulties and I believe this strengthens us as women, as citizens and as professionals. (VITÓRIA DO PIFE, 4 Apr. 2021).

It is very beautiful to see the poetry flying from Vitoria's fife, just as it is very beautiful to see the poetry speaking in its words when it tells us that:

The sound of the fife bands enchants me a lot, and every time I listen to an album by the Fife Band from Caruaru, it brings me back to something I can't explain, it's like a dream, something subjective that tells me some things I can only manage transmit when I play, when I teach, when I see Seu João and Seu Marcos in the workshop, building fifes or zabumbas, doing that with so much love. When I see Mestre Vavá's band Alvorada, or Banda Zé do Estado, with Zé Gago and Seu Bastos breaking everything and Mestre Tonho always serene. A Fife Band is a set of stories. It's not just anyone who picks up a box and plays it, it's not just any zabumba player who plays the zabumba and reproduces that root. Banda de Pife is history, it is the history of the components and a time (VITÓRIA DO PIFE, 04 Apr. 2021).

Vitória's gourd making is not limited to playing. One day, after her appearances in public places as a fife player, she was approached by a fifenized friend who was wanting to

learn to play the instrument. Then teacher Vitória do Pife was born, who later became a luthier and composer. Her essence as an activist woman led her to use part of her time to develop music projects with children and teenagers from Caruaru.

Today, with the experience acquired during her learning process, teacher Vitória, with two years of experience, has developed a methodology that starts from the difficulties she had during her trajectory as a beginner apprentice. Thus, depending a lot on what the person is looking for, he teaches, through orally, the making of fifes, breathing methods, embouchure, note by note and scales. It exercises listening, observation and repetition; all of this, initially, with music more rhythmic than melodic, strategically used to maintain motivation, because *the fife is not an easy instrument*. In her classes, teacher Vitória seeks to transform people, *hence teaching music as a therapeutic method*. In this educational context, she asks students to produce their own fifes. The intention is to establish the first affective bond with the instrument and with the cabaçal music.

For her, in addition to this bond, the fife brought the possibility of perceiving your body, *since just by working your breathing calms you down and takes you to your daily life. Everyone who plays pife is Zen, and I attribute this to the fact that he uses his breath a lot to play the instrument.*

With this dynamic, *music comes as a tool*, not to train music professionals, but to *reach those students who are socially vulnerable, who are already excluded and thus be able to include them in society through the strong social role that music has, to connect people*, the way the fife once worked with her.

Dani Neri: from the European flute to the popular to the fifenized joy of the streets of Brasília

After a while I learned that I inspired other women. [...] I'm proud to be part of a representation of women in fife. Dani Neri (7 Apr. 2020).

Experiences with the urban fife make us realize that it will never be the same as the rural fife. They differ in the way of learning, of playing, in the goals and beliefs of the instrumentalists, in the meanings attributed to musical practices, in the tuning of instruments, in repertoires, on stages, in audiences, etc. In traditional rural bands, urban instrumentalists will seek inspiration for the constitution of a new aesthetic that has even excited and made the masters proud. They are exciting because they know that urban bands are musical machines that can pave the way for traditional bands to jump over fences and also walk on asphalt.

They are proud because the masters realize how much the music they make has been inspiring for there to be so many other works, in so many other places. When the masters realize that there are people interested in the art they produce, they smile, they see new possibilities of resistance and existence for their art.

As with the aforementioned musicians, the fife also crossed the path of Brasília's youth. We learned about this from the WhatsApp group, PifeLivreBrasil, through which we made contact with the flutist/fife player, actress and educator Dani Neri. We explained to her that we intended to write this work and we would like to have a testimonial from her about the fife scene in the country's capital and, above all, about the female participation in this context.

Just as Vitória do Pife proceeded, Dani Neri agreed and sent us a message with his narrative. With your text, to our surprise, we learned that there were a lot of people playing fifes there, men and women. She already knew the Pernambuco Master Zé do Pife, who lived in Brasília and used to play and sell the instruments he made to the university community. The direct contact with the fife came in 2004, through friends who also knew Seu Zé and were enchanted by the instrument and the music Mestre played. In this way, with Mestre, his friend and musician, Davi, he learned to make PVC fifes and, with his friends, he decided to invest in new musical possibilities from this instrument.

From the studied gourds, came the idea of fulfilling the desire to create a carnival scene that would occupy the streets of Brasília. No more trips to Olinda, Recife and Rio de Janeiro; this would be the opportunity to make the streets of Brasília a little more Brazilian. This gave rise to the *Ventoinha de Canudo* block, which, unlike the older ones in the city, is more organic, acoustic and poetic. When Dani told us about the existence of this urban occupation movement 18 years ago, we were in a *state of poetry*, as the singer and composer Chico César says in the album released in 2015. We had never imagined that the fife was operating through the cracks in the concrete of the city. We were very happy to know that in Brasília there were people committed to Brazilianness, freedom of expression and cultural plurality. *Ventoinha de Canudos, the children's block*, as Dani Neri said, represents the realization of a year-round dream, on Carnival Sundays and Tuesdays, go out, gather people of all ages and go out free with their costumes, occupying the city streets and dancing to the sound of the fifes.

As she explained, the city has a lot of space and little street occupation. As everything is so big, it would be all good to make this move to occupy squares, businesses, without a defined route. Outside of any carnival pattern, outside the closed circuit. We love this idea of enabling the popular to be really popular. In the beginning, Dani Neri was the only woman in

the group, but soon others arrived who occupied, initially the standard, then the percussion and, later on, the fifes. Brasilia's carnival took on a new look. Nothing plugged in, a fifenized carnival, drinking from the fountain of Master Edmilson do Pife, the *Irmãos Aniceto*, Carlos Malta, Luiz Gonzaga, Hermeto Pascoal, Gilberto Gil, Pixinguinha, Jackson do Pandeiro, Baden Powell and the *Banda de Fifanos de Caruaru*. An action that resulted in a hybridization process, through which traditional *cabaçal* music, dialoguing and merging with the musical references of the instrumentalists, also sets the tone for the carnival repertoire.

The members of *Ventoinha* are students, former students and teachers of the Escola de Música de Brasília and the Escola de Choro Raphael Rabello. The encounters of its 4 fifes with the *zabumba*, box and plates basically take place a few weeks before Carnival, to rehearse and build the new hats and shirts for the block. *Ventoinha de Canudo is our party! Our rite! Our carnival militancy!* To these words by Dani Neri, we would add that *Ventoinha de Canudo* is a libertarian action, which, through the cracks in Brasília's elitist and excluding carnival, combats the silencing of our musical Brazilianness. Each year, the group has been shaping a path that has already invaded the *tesourinhas*, one of the architectural symbols of modernity in Brasilia. Dani Neri remembers that this road is only occupied by cars and, therefore, causes a great explosion of joy when the block arrives under it.

Thinking with Simas (2020)⁹, this explosion of joy occurs because the street is a place of tension between coloniality and Brazilianness. With this understanding, Boff (2000, p.102, 103) explains that the street, in addition to being a physical place, is also “[...] the set of work relationships, struggle for life, hierarchies and ordinances social relationships between anonymous individuals and the structure that make up the public and official sphere [...]”. However, as he himself adds, “[...] in this space there are also rituals and celebrations such as holidays, national festivities and popular festivals, whether religious (from the patron saints) or secular (from carnivals and football championships)” (author's emphasis). And it is precisely in the Momesque period that *Ventoinha de Canudo* uncloisters Brazilianness, jumps the fence and dominates a territory where bodies domesticated for work can only travel by car, to pick up the plow. A space designed to serve a perverse modernity project that does not allow itself to see a Brazil built from its Brazilianness and which, from the dawn of modernity in the 16th century, is moved by “[...] obsessive and inordinate amounts of power, to enrich, to conquer new lands and to subjugate other peoples” (BOFF, 2000, p. 31, our translation), translated, as he says, in colonialism, imperialism and the desire for material, cultural and

⁹FAU ENCONTROS: Simas, Luiz Antônio. O Encantamento das Ruas. Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ldM5QxM4h0>. Access: 02 Aug. 2021.

religious homogenization. Occupying the *Tesourinha* and filling it with joy, then, is a way of exercising the freedom to be, exist, go, come, say, touch, dance, even if temporarily.

For Simas, in the above-mentioned video, reflecting on street culture also requires a reflection on the diaspora, which he describes as “a phenomenon of disintegration, a break in belonging, a break in identity ties, a social protection network”, but which, on the other hand, still according to this historian, “[...] is also a phenomenon of reproduction of what was lost. [...] If the diaspora disperses, the culture produced by it groups together. It creates other forms of social protection”.

The construction of Brasília, for example, received, above all, people who were looking for better times away from the dry periods in the northeastern hinterlands. People who have separated from their roots and who have lost socialization with theirs, starting to live in a reality where existence coexists daily with the thirst for power, with individualism, with competition. It is in this context that projects such as *Ventoinha de Canudo* create strategies to deal with precarious conditions. The street, thinking again with Simas (2020, our translation), in this sense, is the “space for building a culture of gaps. [...] The street as a meeting point, of sociability, of a social protection network” against modernity/coloniality.

In addition, there are two important aspects to *Ventoinha de Canudo*. The first is that it is a project designed to guarantee a procession in which children are also protagonists. I emphasize the children because the modernization project does not dialogue with this social segment when it thinks about their wishes, so it treats urban spaces that could be or have been places where we could see boys and girls running, playing *bila*, playing hopscotch, play, chestnut game, kite and etc. The second aspect is the female presence pulling the block. When Dani Neri started playing the fife in 2004 and participated in the founding of the band's band, she had no idea what it meant to have a woman playing the fife among a bunch of men. After some time she learned that she had inspired other women to play. Therefore, the fife player is proud of having contributed to the creation of a representation of women in the fife.

From the invention of a tradition around the carnival and the fife, in counterattack, it also combats patriarchy which, according to Boff (2020), had its roots laid down when the caveman ventured into the conquest of this external world that it still insists on dominating, although feminism has “unmasked the presence of male power in all fields of family and social life, in the expressions of language, in the formulation of knowledge and in the institution of rites and traditions, denouncing patriarchy as the oppressive power of woman and man himself” (BOFF, 2000, p. 27, our translation). Boff also adds that this situation has forced men and culture to promote more inclusive and participatory relationships. That's why,

regardless of who blows the fife, men or women, at *Ventoinha de Canudo*, power is exercised by the joy brought by the music, by the spontaneity, by the pleasure of practicing a street carnival.

About the musical practices performed by Dani Neri, it is also important to emphasize that the musician adds fife to her works with education, theater and cultural production. She, who is a member of the Amacaca Teatral Group, directed by Mestre Hugo Rodas, in her personal projects, in addition to private lessons, performs theater and music workshops for groups of children, youth and adults, presentations and workshops in schools, works with acting, creation, direction and sound design of shows and participates in social projects with children and young people from peripheral regions. As she makes a point of emphasizing, always having the pife as a partner. For the musician/actress/producer and educator, these are contributions that generate new possibilities for performances and creative development, both for her and for those who experience her classes. For this reason, in Brasília, many women, inspired by the projects of others, touch, wear hats and sell their classes, including in the various Satellite Cities in the Federal District. Catherine Walsh (2018)¹⁰ says that being decolonial is a life project, and that it is important to live it daily, feel it and create spaces within social fissures. In this sense, the practices of the fife players in Brasília are examples to be followed in the process of decolonization of knowledge, cultural practices and urban spaces where, although propitious, poetry has no place.

Getting to know the *Ventoinha de Canudo* and the beautiful things that the group provides from the fife is a great joy for us who are also in love with this rustic instrument that, with the fiddle and viola, forms the instrumental triad of popular northeastern culture. Even more so is the joy of knowing that the fife has definitely entered the daily life of the country's capital thanks to the actions of a Mestre from the Pernambuco hinterland, Seu Zé do Pife, who taught and inspired the emergence of projects such as *Ventoinha de Canudo* and the band *Mestre Zé do Pife and the Juvelinas*. This group is led by a *Mestre Cabaçal* who left his land leaving family and a great love called *Banda Cabaçal*.

To ease the pain of leaving, he took a lifelong companion in his luggage, his fife. After circulating in other paths, Mr. Zé do Pife arrived in Brasília and discovered the University. Accurate shot. There were people with arms, hearts and souls open to enchantment, to the experience, to the gourd experience. As a result, fife players emerged and, in particular, the aforementioned group, *Mestre Zé do Pife and the Juvelinas*, establishing a dialogical

¹⁰ Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k66AztrWDAw>. Access: 08 June 2021.

relationship between traditional rural knowledge that constituted Mestre and the urban knowledge carried by instrumentalists Kika Brandão (fife and tambourine), Máisa Arantes (fife and fiddle), Naira Carneiro (fife and accordion), Andressa Ferreira (box), Isa Flor (*zabumba*), Gotcha Ramil (fiddle) and Luciana Bergamasch (triangle and plate), who accompany him and they sing.

The rural exodus of Mestre seems to have been traced by the “*Deuses Cabaçais*”. The fife needed to gain the asphalt of the country's capital, a great symbol of the power that operates in this land that was once a colony and that since then breathes coloniality on a daily basis. Seu Zé's fife seems to have been given the mission of decolonizing squares, fairs, events and even spaces at the University of Brasília, where the coloniality of knowledge has probably never spoken and allowed for reading or writing about the *cabaçal* epistemology. We imagine practitioners of traditional and Eurocentred academicism bothered by the boldness of this poor, black northeastern, without mastery of writing and without any theoretical and erudite musical knowledge, entering the academy claiming to be a Master, pushing academicism away, opening gaps, occupying spaces and, with his own methodology, teaching young musicians the knowledge he had once learned in his native turf, playing with other Masters. The methodology of Seu Zé do Pife even in 2010 became a master's research, after Valéria Levay Lehmann da Silva asked him: “Seu Zé, what is your teaching?”

This work, in the field of music education, linked to the Postgraduate Program in Music of the Institute of Arts of the University of Brasília and guided by the desire to know what practices and forms of learning occurred and how they occurred in the fife workshops held at UNB , since 2007, with *Mestre Zé do Pife* as an educator, made Valéria Levay a participant observer, so that he could understand that in the fife workshops in question, the practices and forms of learning did not follow a ready-made methodology. Zé teaches by the method he learned community knowledge, so that his students need to watch the master play, imitate the movements of his fingers, head, eyes, play with him and listen to his stories. The educational practices experienced in the learning processes of community knowledge, as Brandão (2013, p. 20) tells us, involve:

[...] interpersonal, family and community pedagogical situations, where school pedagogical techniques have not yet emerged, accompanied by their exclusive application professionals. Those who know: do, teach, watch over, encourage, demonstrate, correct, punish and reward. Those who do not know, spy, in everyday life, the knowledge that exists there, see how and imitate, are corrected, punished, rewarded and, finally, gradually accepted among those who know how to do and teach, with their own living exercise of doing (2000, p. 20, our translation).

In the case of Seu Zé's workshops, these teaching and learning strategies are repeated and complemented by the notes and footage taken by the apprentice fife players. The cool thing about this, for us, is the practice of 'playing by ear', breaking with the teaching-learning pattern of music in the academy. This methodology may, initially, even make it difficult for learners who depend on classical music writing, but, on the other hand, it allows, among other things, that everyone also experience music with their body and soul, so that this event makes sense.

To understand why we say that Mestre Zé do Pife's methodology breaks with the standards of the academy, it is enough to observe what Pereira (2014, p. 93-94, our translation) points out when analyzing the historical constitution of higher music education in Brazil. His study identified characteristics that deeply link music education to the conservatory institution. According to what he says, in this conservative pattern, teaching is alive:

- [...] in the molds of the medieval craft – the teacher understood, therefore, as a craft master, expert in his art;
- the musician teacher as the final objective of the educational process (artist who, by mastering the practice of his art, becomes the most suitable to teach it);
- individualism in the teaching process: principle of individual class with all the progression of knowledge, technical or theoretical, revolving around the individual condition;
- the existence of a fixed program of studies, exercises and plays (oriented from simple to complex) considered mandatory learning, established as a goal to be achieved;
- the power concentrated in the hands of the teacher – despite the distribution of the program's contents according to the individual development of the student, who decides on this individual development is the teacher;
- western classical music as official knowledge;
- the absolute supremacy of noted music – musical abstraction;
- the primacy of performance (instrumental/vocal practice);
- technical development aimed at the instrumental/vocal domain with a view to virtuosity;
- the subordination of theoretical matters in terms of practice;
- the strong selective character of the students, based on the dogma of “innate talent” (PEREIRA, 2014, p. 93-94, our translation).

These characteristics, as we can see, show a model that corresponds to the teaching of knowledge that privileges European classical music in the 18th and 19th centuries. The traces of coloniality that still persist in higher music education in Brazil are, therefore, the result of the hegemonically European epistemological profile practiced during more than three centuries of coloniality.

Therefore, we verify the epistemicide of knowledge and other knowledge produced outside the white/western cultural pattern. Epistemicide is a term coined by Boaventura de Sousa Santos to denounce this destruction of knowledge and knowledge produced by those considered, by the standard of European power, as inferior and incapable.

For Queiroz (2017, p. 108, our translation), the crime of musical epistemicide committed with cultural expressions that were historically expelled from prominent places in society:

[...] it happened, and still happens today, through the association of these songs with other systems of sound organization and other forms of cultural expression, generally linked to subaltern groups or practices that, based on hegemonic values of the southern hemisphere, they are considered to be devoid of aesthetic, symbolic and social value.

Outside the academy, the *Cabaçais* Bands shake up the daily life of the sertões and circulate through the cracks of coloniality, assuming decolonial characteristics. They bind themselves to popular catholicism and profane when they leave this sacred territory. In the streets, squares and *terreiros*, they give other meanings to their practices and rise up against the standards imposed as a rule, although their traditional repertoire, the formations of groups, the way of playing the flutes, among other characteristics, represent strong marks of colonial culture. In Seu Zé do Pife's workshops, the *Cabaçais* not only speak, they also dance and sing, horizontally, dialoguing, without scores, without selective character, without Western classical music as official knowledge, without individualism, without the ultimate goal of making the apprentice to a virtuous teacher. Everything revolves around a rustic instrument and the musical possibilities it provides in the name of life, joy, and Brazilianness in the Northeast.

Final considerations

With each affirmative action in favor of *cabaçal* music, more people arrive, the more the *cabaçal* epistemology gains importance, the more the masters feel that their art is pulsating and there are people to consume it. These are very important actions that can, in our understanding, expand contributions, especially if they contemplate not only the bands that, in a way, already have lights on them, as does, for example, the project *Tocando Pifanos*, produced in Pernambuco by *Página 21*¹¹, in which they present themselves famous and not famous. For the *Página 21*

¹¹ Available: <https://www.facebook.com/pagina21comunicacao/>. Access: 10 June 2020.

producers, the concern with safeguarding, in this sense, when it comes to Bands Cabaçais, for example, must be greater than the media size of the guest artists.

As Juvelinas, As Três Marias and the Chinela de Couro group are some of the “*fife estriquinadas*”¹² groups, fruit of the work of Mestre Zé do Pife, in Brasília. Fully inserted in this poetic musical history, the teacher, musician and researcher from Brasília, Kika Brandão, emphasizes the importance of women in the musical context of that city. An example that can even be followed by traditional bands, as the feminine has been showing the patriarchy that its will to superiority in relation to the feminine is mistaken and outdated. When the women arrive, everything becomes more colorful, more powerful, including the *cabaçal* music, which touches the core of Vitória do Pife's soul, transports Tauana to the roots we come from, makes Dani Neri inspire other women and has saved Kika Brandão during the pandemic. This very lively music, as Rafaela says, has provoked in her audiences the desire to experience traditional groups.

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¹² Expression used by Kika Brandão to say that musicians are crazy about the fife.

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