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Ethnomusicology in Brazil



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Afro-Brazilian Musical Cultures: Perspectives for Educational Conceptions and Practices in Music*

**Glaura Lucas, Luís Ricardo Silva Queiroz, Luciana Prass,
Fábio Henrique Ribeiro & Rubens de Oliveira Aredes**

Abstract

Brazil has recently witnessed the consolidation of a few public policies aimed at affirmative action programs for the Afro-descendent population. At the same time, laws affecting institutionalized music instruction in Brazil have undergone significant changes. This paper discusses and analyzes a few perspectives and challenges for the joint application of two laws associated with these processes: Lei 10.639/2003, a law that defines “Afro-Brazilian history and cultures” as compulsory themes in primary and secondary education, and Lei 11.769/2008, a law that establishes music as a compulsory part of school curricula. Emphasis is placed on issues related to the integration and study of musical knowledge connected to Afro-Brazilian cultures within the context of formal education, based on a dialogue and intersection between ethnomusicology and music education. The issues developed in this paper show that knowledge produced in both fields have the potential to guide music teaching concepts and practices in schools so that they adequately consider the specificities of Afro-Brazilian musical knowledge. Still, while defending the idea that research, especially ethnomusicological research, offers music teachers an invaluable repertoire of concepts, symbols, and aesthetics related to such cultural practices, we nevertheless emphasize that their actual incorporation into music education in schools and, consequently, the promotion of multicultural and interethnic musical education in Brazil, is subject to a number of social and political issues that are still being developed.

Introduction

People of African descent represent more than half of the population in Brazil, the largest black population in the world outside of Africa.¹ As such, a large number of Afro-descendent communities all over the country maintain and recreate cultural traditions inherited from their ancestors. Such traditions articulate specific knowledge and values that configure particular counter-hegemonic forms of existence; for

instance, in the feasts, rites, and events for which music is central to the performance of a distinctive set of actions. At the same time, new social practices mediated by music, clearly marked by the projection of a Black identity, have always been created and developed throughout history, mainly in urban spaces. Despite such numbers and cultural vitality, it is only in recent decades that concrete social advances regarding the black population have been put into effect, largely due to the struggle of black movements. Amidst political advances and reversals, a few public policies aimed at affirmative action programs for the Afro-descendent population have been instituted. One of them is the *Lei 10.639/2003*, a law that defines Afro-Brazilian history and cultures as compulsory in primary and secondary education curricula.²

At the same time, in the complex scenario of formal education in Brazil, the field of music has been granted greater importance and responsibility due to *Lei 11.769/2008*, which changed the 1996 guidelines to basic education (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases na Educação Nacional – LDB*)³ to include music as compulsory curricular content in the legal normative directions of national primary and secondary education (Brasil 1996; Brasil 2008c).

Given the above circumstances, this paper discusses and analyzes some perspectives on the joint application of these laws, i. e., for the integration of and approach to musical knowledge about Afro-Brazilian cultures in formal education. The issues elaborated throughout this text are guided by theoretical, methodological, and empirical developments from within the fields of ethnomusicology and music education, with specific reference to Brazilian culture. In the connections between both fields of knowledge construction we have sought to identify fruitful dialogues and intersections as well as divergences that represent challenges to be overcome.

On one hand, ethnomusicology is the discipline *par excellence* that has traditionally investigated musical expressions as culturally built social practices, emphasizing the contextual specificities of the meanings and behaviors of musical performances, and promoting cross-cultural studies and dialogues. Upon considering musical studies in Brazil, ethnomusicology is the field of research that has mostly produced and published academic knowledge regarding cultural musical practices of Afro-descendents. What distinguishes these studies is the search for depth and greater conceptual and perceptual proximity to the idiosyncrasies of such cultural practices, enabled through ethnographic research. Besides interpretive approaches, applied research and participative action-research, coupled with collaborative university outreach projects, have steadily increased in the country, allowing participants in the researched traditions to also be protagonists in the decisions and actions undertaken. All these processes have, therefore, contributed to the social visibility of various groups and their cultural expressions.

On the other hand, discussions ignited by social struggles, movements, and victories of specific groups whose knowledge has traditionally been banned from formal music education, have been brought to the center of educational issues since 2000, thus illuminating the debate regarding the very notion of music, including which elements of musical cultures should form the foundation of educational conceptions

and practices in schools. This debate emerges at a crucial moment for Brazilian education, when national guidelines for primary and secondary education stand on a tripartite notion of diversity, plurality, and equality (Brasil 2012a, 2009, 2010). Therefore, it aligns with perspectives coming from both an international order, mainly along UNESCO's guidelines, and local demands that constitute the specificities of contemporary Brazilian culture. Seeking thus to respect and promote a whole host of different kinds of knowledge and equal access to options and conditions, Brazil has evolved considerably in recent years. Many documents were published that recognize the legitimacy, the importance, and the uniqueness of education for itinerant populations (Brasil 2012b), *quilombola*⁴ education (Brasil 2012d), indigenous education (Brasil 2012c), and education in rural areas (Brasil 2002; 2008a).

This paper is written from a standpoint that considers the field of music education as a means of promoting respect and diversity in constructing a multicultural foundation for an education in music. However, scholars and educators who take into consideration the significance of the power of music as a cultural phenomenon must face the challenge of promoting a process of education in music that actually encourages a dialogue between different kinds of knowledge and between the various subjects who produce such knowledge: consciously, coherently, and aware of the complexity as well as the values that pervade each culture. For that, diversity and equality of rights must guide any such dialogues so as not to stigmatize certain cultures and not to push historically segregated knowledge to the background of work in music education.

We therefore assume that knowledge constructed in the sphere of ethnomusicology and music education in Brazil can strengthen concepts and actions for teaching music in the context of Brazilian primary and secondary schools, taking into consideration the country's cultural multiplicity. Ideally, we believe that the ethnomusicological knowledge produced about Afro-Brazilian musical cultures as well as *with* the protagonists of such social practices can strengthen theoretical and practical dimensions by which to address such knowledge in schools while also reinvigorating formal music instruction in general.

However, thoughts on the viability of these propositions raise two central and complementary questions, which guide our discussion in this essay: 1) How can the inclusion of Afro-descendent musical practices be guaranteed in formal basic education so that their epistemological, symbolic, and aesthetic specificities are respected? 2) How can research and knowledge produced in Brazil, especially in ethnomusicology, actually dialogue with conceptions and educational practices in music in a way that advances an adequate approach to Afro-Brazilian musical cultures in primary and secondary education?⁵

In this sense, our discussion begins with a historical contextualization of education in Brazil, highlighting processes concerning the Afro-Brazilian population. It then addresses the context of music education in the country in general, pointing to possibilities and challenges regarding the promotion of an intersectional dialogue with ethnomusicology, a necessary condition, in our understanding, to a proper treat-

ment of Afro-Brazilian musical diversity in formal education. The discussion also relies on written documents and bibliographical scientific research of studies involving fieldwork on Afro-Brazilian cultures.

Education in Brazil and the Afro-Brazilian Population

Despite the massive presence of Afro-descendants in Brazil, the relationship between white and black people in the country, as in other places in the world, has been marked by impositions, restrictions, and inequality, which pushed black cultures to a position of subalternity. Coming from various regions in Africa, enslaved Africans and their descendants populated Brazil's vast territory, and with their labor power, they were largely responsible for developing the nation. Explicit slavery lasted until the end of the nineteenth century, but prejudice and racism limited the access of ex-slaves and their descendants to many facets of social life—formal education, for instance—for almost another century.

Legislation regulating the education of people of African descent in Brazil says a lot about the tense interethnic relationship between white and black people in the country: the former occupying prestigious positions, making the laws, and deciding the directions in which the nation would go, and thus having access to education well before black people; the latter, on the other hand, were directly affected by the legislation created by the former, though always fighting for their rights in every way.

The text introducing the National Curricular Guidelines for the Education of Ethno-racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Cultures (Brasil 2004) weaves an important historical panorama that highlights just how neglected both Afro-Brazilians and the knowledge that comes from Afro-Brazilian cultures have been in formal education in Brazil. Indeed, according to the Guidelines, the *Decreto n° 1.331*, from 1854, established that slaves would not be admitted into the country's public schools and that instruction of black adults would depend on the availability of teachers (Brasil 2004:7). This effectively meant the absence of the Afro-Brazilian population in the Brazilian educational system. As a result of the debates surrounding the abolition of slavery, which began in 1870, the 1878 *Decreto n° 7.031-A* established that black people would only be allowed to attend nighttime classes and as a consequence, many strategies were designed to prevent this population from having full access to a school desk. Despite this inaccessibility of formal education, many Afro-Brazilians could read and write, some even having established autonomous reading/writing groups and clubs (Mello 1994).

It is important to note that in 1888, the year of the "Abolition of Slavery," 95% of the Afro-descendants in the country were already free (Narloch 2006). For quite some time, however, the black population did not receive proper attention from public policies of social inclusion, such as specific educational policy (Brasil 2004). Later, in the 1930s and 1940s, during the *Era Vargas* (Vargas Era),⁶ the *Frente Negra Brasileira* (literally, Brazilian Black Front) began fighting for the black population's

rights. At the time, many newspapers—the so called “Black Press”—were established in the country (Santos 2011). Still, the education of black men and women continued to be marginal to the government’s concerns. One hundred years after “Abolition” and after the many struggles of the *Movimento Negro Unificado* (MNU, literally, Unified Black Movement), created in 1978, and other social movements in the country, a new Federal Constitution was promulgated in 1988. It was then that Brazil started moving toward the condition of a democratic State of rights that emphasized citizenship and dignity to all human persons.⁷ But it was only in 2003 that the *Lei 10.639/2003* was sanctioned, a law that clearly instituted “Afro-Brazilian History and Cultures” as a compulsory part of primary and secondary education in Brazil. This law emerges as a result of a growing movement in the country, which includes a broad discussion and campaign related to affirmative action programs for the inclusion of African descendants in the improvement of living conditions, and the criminalization of racism,⁸ carried out by social movements, specially the black movement. Among these affirmative actions, the creation of public university quotas for self-identifying black students coming from public schools,⁹ as well as land entitlement for *quilombola*¹⁰ communities, are the central foci of much current work in the fields of education, anthropology, and the social sciences, among others. This debate also reaches the field of music, being discussed in ethnomusicology and musical education.

It is thus important to underscore that the National Curricular Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Cultures (Brasil 2004) represent a milestone in Brazilian legislation on education as it is the first document to emphasize a specific direction for the inclusion of knowledge from Afro-Brazilian cultures in the country’s schools that comes from a broad educational perspective rooted in cultural diversity.

In 2008, the same year that music teaching was established as obligatory in schools, *Lei 11.645/2008* was sanctioned in the country. This law reaffirmed the requirement to teach “Afro-Brazilian History and Cultures” in school curricula while further expanding the legislation to include the obligatory teaching of content related to indigenous history and cultures. This law clearly states that “Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Cultures” are transverse axes that must be included in “all school curricula,” involving its various curricular components and subjects. However, this law points to music, literature, and other art forms, as well as to Brazilian history, as being especially equipped to deal with the topic of “Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous history and cultures” in their teaching practices.

The passing of legislation that makes compulsory the teaching of such topics in institutionalized education is a tremendous victory for Brazilian society. However, its consolidation in fact depends on a realignment of teaching conceptions and of the hierarchies related to the kinds of knowledge that pervade the country’s schools. It furthermore depends on special training for teachers, so that they are adequately prepared to deal with the complexity of the various cultures that compose Brazilian society. Moreover, it relies on a systematization of teaching strategies that contem-

plate diversity in the knowledge, actions, and meanings that permeate such cultures. Finally, it depends on the development of teaching materials and resources that align with, among other things, the aesthetic, conceptual, and perceptual specificities of those cultures.

To analyze the types of dilemmas that characterize the incorporation of this kind of cultural knowledge into the Brazilian educational reality, in the next section we point to a number of factors that still today guide content choices and educational perspectives within the realm of music instruction at formal educational institutions. By no means do we intend to generalize about the very diverse nature of Brazilian music education; our aim is to question tendencies, historically constituted in the country's cultural landscape, which can sometimes limit our possibilities of building an interethnic and multicultural system of music education.

Music Education and Ethnomusicology: A Fundamental Dialogue

Educational practices are mainly processes of cultural transmission, "directly related to applied *techniques*, current *rules* and *values* shared by individuals in the context of a given society, culture and historical time" (Rodrigues 2011:9, our translation, emphasis in original). Certain culturally established values and rules become "accepted notions" (*senso comum*), claiming universal validity and a general, unquestionable acceptance. Such dominant ideologies render a largely shared worldview, even if it is from this relatively stable and hegemonic foundation that ideas, positions, and divergent (even conflicting) actions undertaken by subgroups or emerging from intercultural contacts show their internal heterogeneity and the dynamics that either propel transformations or favor cultural continuities, thus defying or confirming dominant ideologies.

Although on one hand these processes take place within various cultures and social groups, on the other hand, we know how especially potent they have been in North Atlantic societies, with their historically built conceptions of cultural superiority and, consequently, an expectation that their concepts and values would be universally valid and applicable. Colonialist societies imposed their models, their knowledge, and their institutions everywhere in the world, while minimizing and making invisible other cultures' and other social groups' ways of being and perceiving of life and the world, including their epistemological systems and aesthetic expressions (Santos 2010a, 2010b).

This is the historical context within which Brazilian music education practices are examined in this essay. Given this scenario, we will address the impact ethnomusicology may have on institutionalized music education, in order for a variety of Afro-Brazilian musical cultures to be properly engaged in schools.

The theoretical convergence of music education and ethnomusicology is nothing new. It has been promoted and discussed in Brazil for any number of reasons, using a variety of perspectives (Lucas 1995; Stein 1998; Arroyo 1999, 2002, 2003; Prass

2003, 2005; Queiroz 2010). In the twentieth century, Brazilian ethnomusicological research on musical cultures was in part dedicated to an understanding of specific practices, situations, and strategies for musical competence, including, for example, enculturation processes that occur in daily social life, established modes of specialized formal teaching, and the various ways musical traditions are transmitted and perpetuated across generations, among other dimensions of the complex network underlying human music learning.

Influenced by this kind of research and also by research in the social sciences, music education has, since the second half of the twentieth century, redefined its methods and directions by questioning socially established guidelines for the teaching of music and by adopting a dialogical socio-cultural approach in its conceptualizations and practices as it increasingly sought to understand music as a culturally mediated social construction (Arroyo 2002:20). Likewise, ethnographic research as a methodology for the construction of educational-musical knowledge has begun to be adopted since the last decades of the past century (Prass 2003:13), supporting inquiry into teaching-learning processes in local cultural contexts as well as pedagogical practices in formal schools (Queiroz 2010).

Nevertheless, certain ideological foundations reflected in formal, Eurocentric conservatory models—claiming conceptual and aesthetic universality as well as universality regarding social practices and processes of transmission—have been reproduced under many guises in various music education environments, not only in European societies, but also in many places in the world these models were introduced. This is what happens, for example, in many undergraduate music programs in Brazil (especially for a music education degree, known as *licenciatura*), which are responsible for preparing future music teachers for formal educational settings. Undergraduate music programs often demonstrate a perpetuation of a certain concept of music as an “accepted notion,” presumed to be universal and/or hierarchically superior. This rather objectified notion of music tends to place the focus of the educational process on the content or a final result rooted in a pre-established ideal to be reproduced faithfully instead of on the learners and the meaningful development of their musicality, their skills, or their expressive capacity, without neglecting their own cultural identities.¹¹

Such a conception of music and socio-musical practice becomes the ideological filter wherefrom other realities and experiences in “acoustic labor”¹² have been historically perceived and studied in institutionalized music education in general. In this sense, the experience and musical contents of traditional groups, founded on other epistemologies, are usually engaged superficially, which leads to a profound loss of the aesthetic and symbolic contents of these kinds of knowledge. The folklorist perspective of the past—of appropriating just the songs and rhythms from traditional popular cultures, and arranging and fixing such expressions according to the values and norms of “accepted musical notions” (equal temperament, hierarchies of musical parameters, duration adjustment, voice placement, etc.) so as to be learned and presented to an external audience—continue to exist in many rushed and

thoughtless propositions of pedagogical materials, in an attempt to meet the demand of the joint application of Law 11.645/2008 and 11.769/2008. These reductions not only subvert the sonorous-musical reality as it is understood and lived by its practitioners; they also minimize and depreciate these expressive traditions, nullifying their complexity, their values, their norms, and their particular alternative forms of existence, such as the practices of sociability linked to them. Consequently, they help maintain these practices in a subaltern position, thus jeopardizing and restraining their integration into school realities. This, in turn, further maintains the dominant ideology mentioned previously.

A specific example from the musical reality of many Afro-Brazilian traditions is the aesthetic and symbolic importance of rhythm and percussion, which, although not absent, tends to be overlooked or not adequately considered in formal teaching contexts. In reductionist propositions, the complexities of timbres, frequencies, subtleties in duration, and contextual rules regarding rhythmic variation and improvisation in percussion are commonly oversimplified or even neglected, relegated to the background.¹³ Another aspect common to Afro-Brazilian traditions, which should be considered when integrated into educational programs, is the explicit and inextricable link that music, singing, dancing, and other bodily gestures share with each other.

For the repertoire belonging to religious contexts, music learning is very often a part of initiation and the general education of the devotee in the corresponding religious tradition. In other words, learning to play and sing in the *Congado* or *Candomblé* religious tradition, for example, is an integral part of becoming a *congadeiro* or a *candomblecista*,¹⁴ or a follower of these religious paths. Generally the performance of this repertoire in a ritual is conditioned by norms and momentary circumstances that aim to induce specific individual and collective results. Certain chants, for example, are conducted according to proper rules and assume a uniqueness dictated by a specific moment in the performance, which can last for hours. We believe that repertoires of this nature should not be arranged in the form of short, fixed pieces to be presented as shows in a school context, which is what often happens with music teaching at the primary and secondary levels.

It is thus clear that one of the great challenges to the promotion of a multicultural teaching of music founded on interethnic respect is to provide the chance for traditionally excluded musical cultures to stand on an equal footing with dominant ones, without being reshaped or redefined according to the ideological references of those who dominate. In this sense, the questions posed by Boaventura Santos will help us consider what might be the most sensitive point in this debate (our translation):

How can we put forward a multicultural dialogue when some cultures were silenced and their forms of seeing and knowing the world were made unpronounceable? In other words, how can we have silence speak without it necessarily speaking in the hegemonic language that wants to make it to speak? These issues constitute a great challenge to a multicultural dialogue. (Santos 2011:30)

Therefore, it becomes important to reflect on naturalized concepts and processes in the teaching tradition in school contexts—which has become more prominent in

the past few decades—in the investigation of the inclusion and adequate treatment of content related to Afro-Brazilian musical cultures. In order to successfully include this content in a way that maintains its links to the singularities of these cultures, one must consider that each tradition's musical experience is founded on particular conceptual and perceptual logics that require teaching-learning definitions akin to their idiosyncratic dynamics.

These concerns demonstrate why ethnomusicology's contribution is so vital. First, it provides theoretical support to the in-depth study of cultural diversity and, thus, highlights the culture specific dimension of supposedly universal features that constitute the naturalized concept of music found at a large number of schools still marked by a dominant mono-culturalism. In this sense, ethnomusicology can contribute to diminishing the pretense of cultural superiority. As a result, then, it contributes in a political way, via the inclusion of historically marginalized musical knowledge into formal music education in such a way that this kind of knowledge can be represented according to the values and worldviews of their producers, as has already been emphasized in the present essay. Such a process of music education, capable of establishing a dialogue among different musical cultures, can promote significant bonds between the school and the protagonists of Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions, making it possible for these agents to finally see themselves in institutionalized school spaces.

Although we are aware that ethnomusicologists and music educators should articulate knowledge provided by both fields of research, a number of factors represent conceptual and pragmatic challenges in today's social scenario, which, in turn, stem from the political tensions between the spheres of actions of both fields in the academic context, historically marked by asymmetrical power relations.

First, the inclusion of music into national education according to *Lei 11.769/2008* gave rise to certain challenges to music professionals along three broad dimensions: 1) the definition of strategies to implement the teaching of music within the multiple realities of a country of continental portions (which is the case with Brazil), and which is marked by so many inequalities; 2) the characterization of concepts and proposals in music education associated with the challenges that pervade the preparation of humans as actors in the world today; 3) the proposition of ways to teach music that are able to engage with the cultural diversity permeating musical expressions in Brazil.

Regarding this third dimension, we can add the mandatory inclusion of Afro-Brazilian cultures in music teaching. As mentioned above, this represents a profound paradigm shift that looks to avoid the tendency of including fragmented, out of context sonorous elements into a conceptually and aesthetically mono-cultural background. This change must begin within curricular structures at the university level, especially in music education programs. We believe that the inclusion of subject areas, such as ethnomusicology, which dwell at the interface of music, culture, and society, or others, which deal with Afro-Brazilian and Amerindian culture specifically, should be mandatory. They should occupy a considerable portion of the

curricula used in degree programs in education. And even though ethnomusicology and other similar subjects have grown progressively more common in graduate programs throughout Brazil, they are still marginal at the undergraduate level, being compulsory in very few music education programs in the country. Making this change in the curricular foundation of music education programs is vital for the spread of conceptual transformations in schools, by which we mean the overcoming of naturalized misconceptions of music and music teaching, still present in many of these contexts.¹⁵

As for pedagogical support, such as textbooks and audiovisual materials, there are, as compared with other fields of knowledge, few proposals for the study of Afro-Brazilian musical cultures that offer a sensitive look into their social and cultural particularities. And there are, unfortunately, few ethnomusicologists who are engaged in elaborating conceptual proposals or materials to this end.¹⁶

Ethnomusicological studies on musical practices of Afro-Brazilians in rural and urban contexts have successfully disseminated knowledge of various kinds, from aesthetic and social particularities to ethno pedagogies and the results of collaborative research done with communities. As a consequence, these studies demonstrate the tremendous potential ethnomusicological work harnesses for innovating music education practices at schools that, from the standpoint of current legislation, effectively promote multicultural, antiracist education. Our argument is that this material constitutes a broad *corpus* of information, which includes the kind of knowledge that can support the formulation of educational projects concerning Afro-Brazilian musical practice. Therefore, in accordance with the perspectives suggested by John Blacking in the 1970s, and which have been further elaborated upon by many other contemporary authors (Campbell 2003; Queiroz 2010), we believe that the kind of knowledge produced by ethnomusicology can provide “a revolution in the world of music and music education,” provided that the knowledge revealed in ethnomusicological investigations is articulated with teaching concepts and actions as well as with musical practice (Blacking 1973:4; Queiroz 2010:119).

Therefore, by assuming an ideological position that the dialogue between music education and ethnomusicology can provide important assistance for the inclusion of Afro-Brazilian musical cultures into primary and secondary education—thus meeting the requirements of *Lei 11.769/2008*, *10.639/2003* and *11.645/2008*—we will present an analysis of some of the ethnomusicological work that has been produced in Brazil in the past few decades in order to demonstrate how this material can help music education programs move toward the actual inclusion of diverse socio-musical knowledge into their curricula. Therefore, we will present a broad panorama of knowledge from Afro-Brazilian musical cultures, albeit hardly representative of the country’s current diversity. We take this to be an invaluable potential source for the preparation of music educators. In the studies analyzed herein, we find aesthetic elements that portray particular ways of making and perceiving music in the context of these cultures. We find, moreover, symbolic historical dimensions that allow us to think and develop contextualized music-teaching actions in accordance with the

complexity that defines the phenomena for the social groups that conceive and produce them.

Afro-Descendent Musical Practices in Brazil: Research in Ethnomusicology as a Potential Source for a Dialogue with Music Education

Before the 1980s, the main sources of information on Afro-descendent musical practices were basically linked to the activities of folklorists, who were often associated with cultural institutions in Brazil. The kind of knowledge they produced was marked by the search for expressions and practices that helped define a Brazilian national identity. Many music education methods and textbooks in Brazil—written in the past but still widely used today—are based on information found in folklorists' studies.¹⁷ Since roughly the 1990s, though, while still recognizing the relevance of the data recorded by folklorist expeditions, Brazilian ethnomusicology has contributed to strengthening research perspectives that go beyond this nationalization paradigm (Travassos 2003).

Assuming a new paradigmatic approach, ethnomusicology in Brazil began working to promote new epistemological intersections/interactions in knowledge production by way of ethnographic studies of a variety of Afro-descendent music practices—traditional, modern, urban, rural, commercial—in ritual, aesthetic, social, and cultural terms. This initial movement can be found in studies such as those by Carvalho (1984) and Segato (1984), who published their dissertations on the *Xangô* religion in Recife (the capital of the state of Pernambuco). *Xangô* is an Afro-descendent religion of Yoruba origin for which possession trance dancing is a central aspect. It is a regional correlate of the more well known religion called *Candomblé* (specifically the *Ketu* nation), from Bahia, which can be seen, for example, in Lühning's (1990) work on the music of the *Ketu* nation in Salvador (the capital city of the state of Bahia). Other studies include those by Pinto (1989), who wrote about the musical context of Bahia's Recôncavo region, focusing on three of the area's most prominent musical traditions, *samba de roda*, *capoeira*, and *Candomblé*, as well as the work by Araújo (1992) on Rio de Janeiro style samba (*samba carioca*), among others.¹⁸ Since then, and with the establishment of graduate programs in music, there has been a significant growth in the production of dissertations, theses, articles, and academic events in ethnomusicology in the country.

Today there is significant variety in the research foci of ethnomusicologists who study Afro-descendent musical practices in Brazil, encompassing thus broader contexts, such as those associated with religious practices and with ritual and social activities, including perspectives related to geographic locations, to social and educational projects, and to communities, individuals, or media contexts.

As an example, we can mention the relationship between the religious realm and musical practices, according to their regional specificities, their multiple socio-historical influences, and their distinctive performances. In this context, there is a

significant amount of ethnomusicological production that allows us to understand the multiple forms of religious musical experiences from the viewpoint of their performative constitution, of the structural and communicative functions of its music, and of the power relations and processes of resistance involved in their performance, etc. *Candomblé* was the research focus for Cardoso (2006) and Vasconcelos (2010), besides the previously mentioned authors. Borges (2011) studied *Umbanda*, an Afro-Brazilian religion marked by intense syncretism with African, European, and indigenous elements, and which includes possession trance. Similarly, *Tambor-de-Mina*, a religion related to the Jeje nation of *Candomblé* (and historically rooted in the religious practices of West African Gbe speakers) that developed in the state of Maranhão, was studied by Gouveia (2001). *Congado*, an Afro-Catholic practice of black brotherhoods and communities in the state of Minas Gerais, has been studied by Lucas (2002, 2005) and Pereira (2011).

Other socio-cultural dimensions can be understood from other experiences regarding ritual procession, as well as from various collective dances, different kinds of social clubs (*agremiações*), and the interactions between musical practice and sacred spaces and/or communities. *Catopês*, a local type of *Congado* that are present in northern Minas Gerais, were studied by Queiroz (2005), Mendes (2009), and Ribeiro (2011). Prass (2013) has investigated *Maçambiques*, *Quicumbis*, and *Ensaaios de Promessa*, which are Afro-catholic practices developed in the state of Rio Grande do Sul but which are also related to the *Congado*. We wish also to highlight studies on the music dedicated to certain spiritual entities in *Candomblé* temples in Bahia (Chada 2006), works on music education in non-governmental organizations supporting socio-economically impoverished communities, such that of Guazina (2011), and in social projects (Aredes 2013), studies on the relationship between violence and music in slums in Rio de Janeiro (Cambria 2012), and work on the use of the *caxixi*, an Afro-Brazilian musical instrument in Salvador (Gallo 2012).

Moreover, we can also note the investigative contexts of commercial music involving recordings, mechanical reproduction, reproduction on the Internet, and the organizing/producing of events with music. In these contexts, musical practices are understood in relation to urban spaces and their multiple socio-cultural dimensions, in relation to elements from their cultural traditions, in their connections with the entertainment industry, and in relation to the resulting processes of meaning recreation. An example is Agerkop's (2007) ethnography on musical groups that blend elements from traditional northeastern Brazilian music with elements of international pop, the work of Dutra (2008) on political resistance in São Paulo's rap, the work of Amaral (2009) on socio-musical practices of *tecnobrega* (a genre from the outskirts of Belém, the capital of the northern state of Pará), Kuschick's (2011) ethnography on the performance sites of *suíngueiros* (literally, "swingers") in Rio Grande do Sul,¹⁹ and Erthal's (2012) ethnography on *pagode* (a commercial sub-genre of *samba*) in the everyday life of the youth living on the outskirts of Londrina, in the state of Paraná.

In this brief survey of research projects on different kinds of cultural expressions—and we have cited only a few examples—the ethnomusicological approaches present various foci, often on issues of a community's identity construction, the articulation of such an identity with society at large, internal tensions expressed through music, and the articulation of musical performances in identity affirmation. With regard to Afro-descendent musical practices, the field has provided diverse thematic directions, according to multiple viewpoints, in an effort to understand meanings, power relations, safeguarding policies, elements of performance, intercultural relations, musical transmission processes, and ideological, epistemological, and interdisciplinary dimensions, among others (e. g., Náder 2008; Diniz 2011; Giesbrecht 2011; Amorim 2012).²⁰

Given such a wide range of research possibilities, we consider a few recent directions as being important advances that have resulted from developments of an ethnography-based ethnomusicology. The development of ethnomusicological perspectives on public policies, gender relations, racial identity and inequality, educational processes, etc. have grown considerably in recent years, providing more interaction between the investigative praxis and the socio-cultural needs of their fields of study.

Studies on gender relations have provided a reinterpretation of academic knowledge about Afro-descendent musical expressions, reframing their constitution from a “feminine” point of view, and with attention to the symbolic, practical, political, and cultural aspects of the actions of women (Rosa 2009). Studies on the conceptions, development, execution, and results of public policies on the safeguarding of heritage in Brazil have provided a political proximity between ethnomusicology and government activity, allowing for a finer articulation of the field with public policy institutions (Carmo 2009; Fonseca 2009). Applied ethnomusicological and collaborative studies are profoundly linked to the methodologies of action research, thus providing joint knowledge production among the various authors involved. Research involving collaborative approaches has allowed for a reassessment of fieldwork procedures and a strengthening of the bond between academy and society. Above all else, however, these collaborations have shaped research in a way that meets local demands, in accordance with the aesthetic and ideological interests of the groups in question (Cambria 2012; Lucas & Luz 2006; Prass 2013).

Given these contemporary perspectives in Brazilian ethnomusicology, we feel that research on Afro-descendent musical practices has constituted a potential *corpus* of scientific knowledge for a dialogue concerning the multiple paths that can be taken in music education. In this sense, we can highlight the following: a more consistent development of public policies; the assignment of new meanings to concepts of musical diversity; a political, theoretical, and methodological repositioning towards the interactions between traditional as well as urban cultures and hegemonic society; and a discussion about the broader cultural aspects that originate from musical practices and meanings.

As for studies on public policies, governmental actions have taken into consideration the knowledge generated in Brazilian ethnomusicology, fostering thus signifi-

cant advances in the understanding and promotion of actions and policies related to heritage (esp. intangible heritage). In this context, we note the actions of the *Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional* (IPHAN),²¹ a federal organ linked to the Ministry of Culture, which has promoted fruitful dialogues with the epistemological and methodological dimensions of ethnomusicology while seeking to understand Brazilian musical cultures, such as *samba de roda* (IPHAN 2006; Sandroni 2010) and *jongo* (IPHAN 2007), as well as the construction and practice of a musical instrument called the *viola de cocho* (IPHAN 2009). The knowledge originating from the heritage declaring process and the safeguarding of these musical practices and traditions has allowed for the development of educational policies related to heritage, recognizing the need for the participation of cultural communities in educational activities (IPHAN 2014), thus constituting potential perspectives for actions in music education in many different contexts.

Finally, with a discursive and ideological repositioning, ethnomusicological studies on traditional and urban Afro-descendent musical practices offer a contextualized vision of such practices, demonstrating how aesthetic dimensions of music-making are both composing and being composed by political, economic, social, and cultural issues. Therefore, such a *corpus* transcends the aesthetic dimension of musical practices, leading us to understand how people elaborate their socio-musical actions and interactions. The set of issues highlighted in ethnomusicological research on Afro-Brazilian culture—vis-à-vis music education perspectives that support equal access and diversity—can strengthen concepts and practices in primary and the secondary school music education, building on a foundation of respect and dialogue.

Final Remarks

Lei 11.645/2008 and *11.769/2008*—which obligate primary and secondary schools in Brazil to teach topics related to Afro-Brazilian and indigenous history and culture, as well as to teach music—represent great social advances. The first law is a victorious step toward promoting racial equality in the country. The second law represents a recognition of the importance of music for the human experience and, thus, for personal development.

A number of factors elucidated by the analysis and discussion elaborated in this essay point to political and social perspectives and challenges for which the joint accomplishments of these laws may produce a positive impact. Researchers, teachers, and scholars have been working on interactions in music education that favor the interrelation of diverse kinds of cultural knowledge, so that music education may broaden its scope by recognizing, valuing, and adopting cultural diversity as the groundwork for an interethnic and multicultural education in music. This debate has emphasized the need to treat with impartiality the various voices belonging to different musical cultures without the imposition of those voices that have for so long spoken and been listened to as dominant, particularly given the inequalities that still

mark Brazil. As in all paradigm shifts, this too requires a political willingness to embrace assertive measures at many institutional levels.

Afro-Brazilians have historically been marked by countless forms of deprivation, including public policies related to national education, a fact that calls attention to the need for a responsible approach to Law 11.645/2008 in schools. For this, music teachers, researchers, artists, master musicians, and practitioners of popular/traditional cultures need to channel their efforts so that we may actually include knowledge from Afro-Brazilian musical cultures in music education, without oversimplifications or resignifications of any sort.

The promotion of an interethnic dialogue, in this case, with Afro-Brazilian knowledge, will require music teachers to engage with a number of particular kinds of knowledge that can provide them with broad dimensions of the concept of music and that can reveal the aesthetic and symbolic complexity that defines Afro-Brazilian cultural diversity. In this way, the kind of knowledge produced by Brazilian ethnomusicology on musical practices of Afro-Brazilian cultures is crucial in promoting the intersection of such knowledge with formative notions and actions in music education at the primary and secondary levels. Ethnomusicological inquiry into Afro-Brazilian cultures can currently support the actions and practices of music teachers at schools in at least three ways: 1) access to sound archives from numerous musical traditions, whose expressions, representation, and perception are linked to the idiosyncrasies of those cultures in the country; 2) the understanding and perception of musical practices beyond sound structures by identifying meanings that make these practices relevant to the lives of the people who produce and experience them, according to their own logical forms of knowledge construction; 3) recognition and inclusion of the interethnic diversity that defines Afro-Brazilian cultures as a required element for the promotion of a multicultural music education, connected to ethnomusicological discussions.

To avoid reducing this research archive to a mere sound collection, detached from the contexts that assign it social and cultural meanings, subjects such as ethnomusicology, among others that deal specifically with Afro-descendent cultural heritage, should be compulsory in music programs that grant degrees in music education at universities throughout Brazil, something that is still quite rare.

In order to bring together ideas and actions that strengthen music teaching, Afro-Brazilian cultural knowledge, and diversity as a human right, we believe it is necessary to transcend the barriers imposed by a subject-oriented curriculum, which still guides our academic structures. Therefore, our argument in this text does not lie specifically on the borderline between ethnomusicology and music education; it instead aims to promote a dialogue among different kinds of knowledge originating in these and other fields, so as to support music education at schools. Such an education must, of course, include various musical cultures, and promote a dialogue between the urban and rural, indigenous and Afro-Brazilian, while also including commercial musical cultures, among others, in an effort to avoid silencing or misrepresenting any of them.

In this sense, the project entitled *Encontro de Saberes nas Universidades Brasileiras*,²² created by the *Instituto Nacional de Ciência e Tecnologia de Inclusão no Ensino Superior e na Pesquisa (INCTI)*²³ of the University of Brasília and coordinated by ethnomusicologist José Jorge de Carvalho,²⁴ appears very positive and promising. The project includes a course entitled “*Artes e Ofícios dos Saberes Tradicionais*” (Arts and Skills of Traditional Knowledge), which is offered to undergraduate students by masters of traditional knowledge of all kinds, together with host university professors. The course is offered to university students of all areas of study, in a trans-disciplinary manner, containing modules covering various kinds of human arts and skills. The project promotes an inter-epistemic dialogue aimed at “a double inclusion: of the arts and traditional knowledge into the curriculum and, at the same time, of the male and female traditional masters as members of the faculty” (INCTI 2015).²⁵ Having begun in 2010, the Project has already been adopted by other universities in Brazil. Some modules have included discussions about Afro-Brazilian musical knowledge.

Afro-Brazilian cultures—as soon as it is present in schools and invited to participate actively in the set of traditionally privileged cultural subject matter within these institutions—can contribute to Brazilian music education with ways of thinking, making, and experiencing music that lie outside the canon consecrated in formal music teaching. These particular musical forms can thus challenge naturalized notions of music, such as equal temperament scales, the vocal *bel canto* aesthetic, the melodic-harmonic emphasis in the hierarchy of sound parameters, tonal tuning as a reference of quality, a meter defined by the pulse and divisions of the beat, among other aspects.

In this scenario, the music of such traditions as *congados*, *jongos*, *Candomblés*, *maracatus* and *cocos de roda*, among others, can allow for the emergence in schools of new modes of perception and conceptualization, as well as new ways to make and imagine music. In this sense, the discipline of ethnomusicology must provide both the conceptual foundations to broaden understandings about the diversity of musical experiences and the data and information about particular musical practices and traditions. In addition to differentiated aesthetic and acoustic parameters in music teaching, these expressions can bring to the practice of teaching music in schools not only different ways of existing in the world but also ethnic, religious, and gender singularities, among other aspects linked to the Afro-Brazilian context, which contribute toward a multicultural music education. In particular, the presence of cultural diversity in educational sites favors the awareness that every musical expression has its own culturally and socially established meanings and values, thus dismantling universalized ideological concepts. The aim is, therefore, to develop a trans-disciplinary and transversal music education that can help minimize prejudice and discrimination, one that can appreciate musical practices in all their complexity and thus promote what, in fact, should be the aim of all education: human development.

Notes

- * This article was translated from the Portuguese by Rosana Lucas.
- 1 According to data from the last demographic survey by Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística in 2010. See <http://www.brasil.gov.br/educacao/2012/07/censo-2010-mostra-as-diferencas-entre-caracteristicas-gerais-da-populacao-brasileira>.
 - 2 In 2008, this law was updated as *Lei 11.645*, which includes subjects related to indigenous cultures.
 - 3 Law of Guidelines and Foundations in National Education.
 - 4 *Quilombola* refers to the inhabitants of *quilombos*, communities of Afro-descendants, especially former maroon communities.
 - 5 This reflection can contribute to efforts to overcoming racism in Brazil, a distinctive feature of which is that it hides behind dominant ideologies about racial mixture, which, in fact, promote particular ideas and knowledge of privileged social groups over others. Among the knowledge that is neglected is that of the Afro-Brazilian populations.
 - 6 “*Era Vargas* is the title given to the fifteen-year period during which Getúlio Vargas was president of Brazil (from 1930 to 1945). This time was a hallmark in Brazilian history because of the many social and economic changes that Getúlio Vargas introduced in the country.” (<http://www.sohistoria.com.br/ef2/eravargas/>).
 - 7 One of the achievements of the Federal Constitution of 1988 was universal access to basic education regardless of race.
 - 8 Enacted in January 1989, *Lei 7.716* provides punishment to those who perpetrate racial discrimination crimes and regulates that racism is a non-bailable and imprescriptible crime in the Federal Constitution.
 - 9 It is important to note that, historically in Brazil, public universities are those which have provided a higher quality education and until the end of the past decade, with rare exceptions, most of their students were white, from middle class or wealthy backgrounds. According to Queiroz and Santos (2006: 720, our translation), “The first proposition of quotas for the black population at federal public universities emerged at UnB [University of Brasília] in 1999.” Presented to the *Conselho de Ensino e Pesquisa (CEPE)* by Professor José Jorge Carvalho and Professor Rita Laura Segato (Carvalho and Segato 1999), it stipulated that 20% of its enrollment should be reserved for Black students. In 2001, two universities had already adopted the quota system: the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) and the State University of Bahia (UNEB). Since 2007, several universities have started offering vacancies for quota students who studied at public high schools, including self-identifying black students. In 2012 the inclusion of quotas for people who studied at public schools and who self-identify as black (and studied at public schools) became a national law (*Lei n° 12.711/2012*). With the inclusion of these social groups, new topics and new realities flooded university classrooms, clamoring for adjustments and adaptations. For a more thorough discussion, see Steil (2006).
 - 10 For Brazilian anthropologists, the discussion about remaining *quilombo* communities is already quite lively (O’Dwyer 2002; Arruti 2006). However, researchers for researchers less familiar with the field it is worth noting that “remaining *quilombo* communities” have become a legal category after the promulgation of the 1988 Constitution, which guarantees “final ownership recognition to remaining quilombo communities occupying their land; to that effect, the State must issue the respective titles” (*BRASIL, Constituição da República Federativa do Bra-*

- sil*, promulgated on October 5, 1988. Published by DOU n. 191—on October 5, 1988) in article 68 of Transitional Provisions. Since then, a large movement has taken place in Brazil to recognize and map these Black communities for posterior anthropological reports by the *Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário (MDA)*. Official 2015 data from the *Fundação Cultural Palmares* show 2474 remaining areas of certified *quilombos* in Brazil (further information available at http://www.palmares.gov.br/?page_id=88).
- 11 Therefore, presentational performance (Turino 2008) becomes the social practice par excellence, underlying such a notion and, consequently, the social demonstration of success for many projects in music education.
 - 12 The expression “acoustic labor” was coined by the Brazilian ethnomusicologist Samuel Araújo to refer to a practice that originates from “the abstract process of working time acoustically,” thus contributing to deconstruct the constraints implied in the dominant usage of the term music (Araújo 1992:217).
 - 13 This hierarchical relationship became evident, for example, in a call launched by the city council of Belo Horizonte (Minas Gerais), aimed at licensing specialized institutions of music education to serve the town’s public primary and secondary education system, thus implementing Law 11.769. According to it, teachers’ remuneration would depend on the types of instruments with which they would work. As such, those working on theoretical and practical issues with orchestral instruments earned the most; those working with contemporary urban pop music instruments earned less (78%); and those working with traditional Afro-Brazilian percussion instruments earned the least (60%).
 - 14 *Congado* and *Candomblé* are two very popular Afro-Brazilian religious traditions.
 - 15 It is important to note that, according to *Parecer CNE/CP 03/2004* of the National Council of Education, the inclusion of cultural Afro-descendent and Indigenous topics is also mandatory in undergraduate courses in Brazil.
 - 16 The book *'Cantos Tikmu'um para abrir o mundo* is an example of pedagogical material concerning information related to indigenous culture. It was elaborated by students at UFMG (Federal University of Minas Gerais) and supervised by Professor Rosângela Pereira de Tugny. It includes a DVD with audiovisual material, much of which recorded by the inhabitants of the Maxacali (indigenous) settlement in Minas Gerais.
 - 17 Many of these materials focus on the teaching of musical values and acoustic patterns along a hierarchy based on North Atlantic music.
 - 18 During this time, other Brazilian researchers had an important role in consolidating Brazilian ethnomusicology with themes that did not deal with the musical production of Afro-Brazilians. The first Brazilian ethnomusicologist to receive a PhD degree was Manuel Veiga, in 1981. His studies focused on indigenous populations in Bahia and on *modinhas* and *lundus* (in historical perspective). Also worth mentioning is Maria Elizabeth Lucas, whose 1990 dissertation is about “native music” festivals in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Rafael José de Menezes Bastos, who studied the *Kamayurá* Indians, and Elizabeth Travassos, who researched the music of the *Kayabi* Indians of Xingu Park for her MA degree in 1984.
 - 19 A “suíngueiro” (or swinger) performs *swing*, as the local version of *samba rock* is called.
 - 20 The theoretical dimensions and the resulting epistemological intersections of Brazilian ethnomusicological production significantly portray the trans-disciplinary character of the subject. In such a context, as mentioned, the strong ethnographic tradition has guided a meaningful part of the knowledge produced in Brazilian ethnomusicology. As for epistemological intersections, we should note the constant contact with the fields of musicology, cultural and interpretive an-

thropology, performance and cultural studies, postmodern studies, and history and sociology, among others.

- 21 Institute of the National Historic and Artistic Heritage.
- 22 Meeting of Knowledges at Brazilian Universities.
- 23 National Institute of Science and Technology of Inclusion in Higher Education and Research (INCTI).
- 24 The Project is part of a program of *Institutos Nacionais de Ciência e Tecnologia do Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq)*.
- 25 A technical document of *Instituto Nacional de Ciência e Tecnologia de Inclusão no Ensino Superior e na Pesquisa (INCTI—CNPq, Ministério da Ciência, Tecnologia e Inovação)*, coordinated by José Jorge de Carvalho.

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