

2.5. Between drums and drones: the urban experience in São Paulo's punk music

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Abstract

The advent of punk marked a turning point amidst the pop culture universe. Punk music, as the centralizing element of the movement's identity, emerged with the proposal of breaking-up the conventions of musical expertise and technique increasingly present in rock compositions of the early 1970s. The return to a simple musical form combined with an emphasis on the dynamics of everyday life's ordinary reality brought to the composition core both the particular sonorities of the great cities – the general hum of the city – as well as narratives of urban daily life, establishing music as a powerful vehicle of transmission of urban experiences. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the punk movement as a lens of analysis of urban phenomena, particularly by observing which questions punk casts over the peripheral urban context of Sao Paulo city, Brazil. The Brazilian punk bands that emerged in the early 1980s, a period essentially marked by an inconclusive process of political redemocratization, show a particular accent over the issues raised by punk in the US and UK, for instance. The Brazilian context enhanced the rudeness and aggressiveness of the punk language, for it embodied a possibility of eagerly expressing the experience of crisis amid the complexity of the urban environment. The over-accelerated rhythm and the poetic density of Sao Paulo's punk draw attention to the tensions and relations tacitly present in the city space as they were perceived and experienced in everyday life, therefore allowing a more complex investigation of contemporary urban phenomenon in Brazil.

Keywords: punk rock; urban space; urban experience; Sao Paulo city.

Introduction

Unlike other forms of art that touch us through the most rational sense which is sight, music reaches us through the most sensitive one, which is hearing. In order to turn away from a picture that does not please us, it is much easier than with a song. Its range of action in space seems to be much more open, almost infinite, because the notes are spread over larger waves than the traces attached to the concrete limits of the frames. In this sense, within music, a distorted guitar note seems to reach not only the ear and the brain, but every single cell of the human body (Chacon, 1983, p. 13).²

As a means of cultural expression, music has an inherent spatial dimension. The musical language is able to incorporate and convey spatial images, as both the medium and the outcome of environmental experiences, simultaneously producing and reproducing social systems (Kong, 1995, p. 4). In this sense, the massive diffusion of music in almost every situation of urban daily life, makes it one of the most powerful vehicles for the understanding of the character, the identity, the tensions and relations tacitly present in the city space. In

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² All citations were freely translated from the original in Portuguese.

spite of the strong presence of elements such as space, place and city in musical language, music itself has been little explored as a source for the comprehension of urban issues, especially in the field of urbanism.

In parallel, the traditional means of apprehension and analysis of urban space employed in the field of urbanism have significant limitations given the complexity of the contemporary metropolis. The technocratic objectivity of their methods alienates from the small ordinary events of everyday urban life, i.e., the experience and practice of the real city. Thus, understanding the contemporary city from the bonds between social life and urban space as expressed through music, enables a whole new set of layers to the apprehension, analysis and research of the urban phenomenon, going towards "decisions linked to the movement of the real actors who design the city" (Rolnik, Kowarik & Somekh, 1990, p. 15).

In this context, punk presents itself as one of the best investigative objects for addressing the urban space from a musical point of view. Born in the United States and England, around the cities of New York and London, and in the midst of deep political, economic and social crises of the 1970s, it is connected to a political, economical and social system in deep and disorienting transformation. By keeping distance of an utopian revolutionary positioning, punk sought in the reality of urban chaos, the basis for its constitution.

Punk music, the centralizing element of the whole punk culture, emerged with the proposal of breaking the traditional assumptions of competence and technique increasingly present in the music of the early 1970s. A return to a simpler musical form in combination with an enhancement of everyday life ordinary reality, brought to the centre of the composition both sonorities of great cities as well as narratives of urban daily life, making music a powerful vehicle of transmission and absorption of daily urban experiences.

If ever since the early days of popular music, particularly in the 1950s rock'n'roll, the city is a constant theme in musical compositions, in punk it becomes central whether in textual terms (lyrics), whether in formal and structural terms (instrumentation). Thus, the punk has produced an extensive symbology that differed from any other movement, signalling a manner of being in the world accentuated by the conditions of urban space and establishing a repertoire that appears constantly mixed and confounded by city description.

Despite the peculiarities of the Brazilian cultural context, the frank appropriation of the aesthetics, the attitude and the whole musical proposal of punk in Brazil, potentializes the possibilities of the movement's analysis as it permits a parallel analysis between different urban and social realities. Therefore, the analysis of musical pieces of the first punk bands of Sao Paulo, the place where the movement emerged in Brazil, permits the examination of which regards and questions punk casts over the peripheral Sao Paulo city urban context in the passage from the 1970s to the 1980s.

With the purpose of understanding how the experiences of everyday life and cultural expressions influence each other so as to render explicit certain urban issues, this paper proposes to develop a study of urban space through music. Therefore, it is brought into debate a set of musical elements that emphasizes the potential of music in revealing different perceptions of daily urban life, so as to set it as an important tool for examining the contemporary city.

São Paulo: a different kind of tension

As well as in the original punk contexts, the Brazilian social environment in which was born "one of the most representative punk scenes outside of the English language" (Alexandre, 2004, p.62) was certainly tense. A different kind of tension, however, very specific and distinctive from the one existing in Ramones' and the Sex Pistols' countries. The Brazilian specificities of this period, manifested by military dictatorship scenario³, economic dependency and social inequality, resulted in a very peculiar appropriation of punk's language, aesthetics and attitude as a manner of expressing the everyday struggle of the urban peripheral youth.

By the end of the 1970s, after doubling its population in less than two decades, heading 8,5 million inhabitants⁴, Sao Paulo became the largest city not only in Brazil but throughout South America. This vertiginous and recent process of metropolization, as a consequence of the intense industrialization in the mid-1950s (Rolnik, 2003, p 43), reconfigured not only Sao Paulo's sociocultural environment, but also the very perception people had about its space.

If since the beginning of the 20th century, when the city experiences its first industrial boom, there has been a concern on the part of Sao Paulo's cultural elite in building an identity for the city based on the ideas of modernity and urbanity, which the Week of Modern Art⁵ of 1922 is exemplary; it is from the 1950s that this imaginary definitely consolidates itself: what seemed to be an exceptional prospect in the 1920s became an undeniable reality thirty years later. From this moment on it is established a proper *paulistan culture* in a broader sense (artistic, architectural, mediatic, industrial), distinctive from any other Brazilian regionalism, especially the one around Rio de Janeiro.

Furthermore, the inauguration of the first segment of the Sao Paulo Metro system in 1975, with a line connecting the northern and southern zones passing through the downtown area, definitely attested to the cosmopolitan imagery of Sao Paulo. Although the installation of the Metro did not represent, at first, a significant change on the traveling dynamics of the city, which would continue to occur on a large scale by buses and private cars, the introduction of the metropolitan transport system had an important symbolic effect, introducing the city to a new era of technology, speed and efficiency without precedents in Brazil. In this manner, it reinforced the idea of an effectively modern Sao Paulo way-of-life, comparable to those experienced in the largest and most important urban centres of the world.

However, the contradictions highlighted by economic, political and social conditions on a local, national and global level, elapsed in Brazil by the experience of the military dictatorship, resulted on a general pessimism towards the gigantism and urgency of Sao Paulo, the city "that cannot stop"⁶, a new socio-cultural scenario from which would unfold the Brazilian punk movement.

One of the major incongruities of Sao Paulo's context is exactly the configuration of its urban area, predominantly consisted of poor and precarious suburban neighbourhoods – the peripheries (*periferias*) – constructed in the form of dormitories cities and in which overlaps

³ The Brazilian military regime occurred between the years 1964 and 1985. Characterized as an authoritarian period, it suppressed the civil freedoms and censured media and individual expressions.

⁴ Source: http://infocidade.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/htmls/7_populacao_recenseada_1950_10552.html (last access: 12/05/2014).

⁵ The Week of Modern Art (Semana de Arte Moderna) was an event held in Sao Paulo in 1922 with the purpose of promoting the Modernist movement amongst Brazilian art.

⁶ São Paulo não pode parar was a popular expression created by Ademar de Barros, mayor of Sao Paulo between the years of 1957 and 1961 (Rolnik, 2003, p. 48).

numerous exclusion factors such as "poor education, high unemployment rates, deficient urban services and radically outcasted from the places where the opportunities circulate" (Rolnik, 2003, p. 51). Amidst the *Brazilian Miracle*⁷ that followed the military coup, at which time that Sao Paulo city (in addition to its metropolitan area) becomes a major focus of public investment and establishes itself as the dynamic centre of the richest state in the country, this acute process of *peripherization* and spatial segregation denounces a situation of deep social inequality in which "are juxtaposed and superposed traces of opulence, due to the strength of the economic life and their material expressions, and signs of demise, due to the delayed state of the social and political structures" (Santos, 1990, p. 13).

Periphery: "the subterranean, invisible city" in the words of geographer Milton Santos (Santos, 1990, p 53.). Thus, this condition of socio-spatial marginality and invisibility of the peripheral population, especially under the tense conjuncture of military control, repression and censorship of the military dictatorship, ultimately represented an obstacle for accessing the opportunities of human development that were mostly offered at the centralized areas of the city.

Therefore, it is by appropriating its own circumstance of inferiority that Sao Paulo's punk builds its identity, "they insist on stating that they are from the periphery, that they are in a bad situation, at the intestine layers of society, at the lower levels of all hierarchical scales" (Abramo, 1994, p. 101): by affirming and accentuating this condition, punk builds its complaint. It is symptomatic of this construction, for example, the first Brazilian punk record ever made, the compilation entitled *Grito Suburbano (Suburban Scream)*, soon followed by the compilation entitled *SUB*. The lyrics of the song *Periferia*, by the punk band *Ratos de Porão*, this statement is even more explicit and emphatic:

Everything happens at the periphery/ Fights, death at the periphery/ Shots, blood at the periphery/ At the periphery/ Everything happens at the periphery/ Everything happens at the periphery/ Stuff runs straight through at the periphery/ We keep the anarchy at the periphery/ At the periphery⁸ (Song *Periferia* by *Ratos de Porão*, 1984).

⁷ The Brazilian Miracle (Milagre Brasileiro) is an expression that concerns the exceptional economic growth observed in Brazil between the years of 1968 and 1973. This period was also marked by the hardening of the military dictatorship repressive apparatus, as well as by the remarkable increase of wealth concentration and poverty.

⁸ Original Portuguese lyrics: Tudo acontece na periferia/ Brigas, morte na periferia/ Tiro, sangue na periferia/ Na periferia/ Tudo acontece na periferia/ Tudo acontece na periferia/ Bagulho corre direto na periferia/ Mantemos a anarquia na periferia/ Na periferia/ Tudo acontece na periferia.



Figure 1 - Back cover of the album *Pior que Antes* by *Garotos Podres*, 1988

Internationally, the broad cycle of structural changes of the industrial society initiated in the 1960s which featured a complete review of the practices and control of social and economic spheres - from labour relations and consumer behaviours, to technologies and the general configurations of political power - ignited a deep and generalized state of crisis. According to Elsa Vivant (2012), pioneering industrial cities such as New York and London, "were those that suffered the most with the industrial crisis: in face of rising unemployment, capital flight and the constitution of vast voids in former industrial properties" (p. 9). As from the 1970s, however, these new configurations came to present themselves through a large variation of discourses and practices of social phenomena, triggering unprecedented cultural processes, particularly with regards to the perceptions of urban citizens in relation to their environment.

Amidst this scenario of crisis and reconfiguration of social systems, punk emerged by placing itself in a rupture position with previous forms of youth cultural action, especially the precepts of the hippie generation, one of the major movements of the 1960s. At this moment, a new reality was imposing itself upon the libertarian and utopian hippie essence, destabilizing its main ideological pillar: the construction of an alternative and renewed society, communal, rural and self-sustained (Pereira, 1983, p 82; Abramo, 1994 p. 20). Its music shows mythical and surreal spaces, great psychedelic trips:

So we sailed up to the sun/ Till we found the sea of green/ and we lived beneath the waves/
in our yellow submarine (Song *Yellow Submarine* by *The Beatles*, 1969).

In England, however, as from the 1970s, the English Labour Party begins to collapse and is no longer able to ensure a social welfare state. Numerous strikes of civil servants erupt in the city such as garbage collectors that leaves piles of waste on the streets, public transportation,

creating huge traffic congestions and paralyzing the city, besides the closure of hospitals and airports. In short, the city becomes intolerable and absolutely chaotic. The situation in New York did not differ, particularly when in 1975 it was considered bankrupt and unmanageable (Harvey 2011, p 137.). This situation was perfectly illustrated by the infamous message of President Gerald Ford that ended up printed as the headline of the New York Daily News: "Ford to City: Drop Dead"⁹.

I mean, New York City declared bankruptcy! Compared to what was going on in the real world, decadence seemed kind of quaint. So punk wasn't about decay, punk was about the apocalypse. Punk was about annihilation. Nothing worked so let's get right to Armageddon (McNeil & McCain, 2006, p. 256).

Additionally, in a world in a constant process of urbanization¹⁰, the dichotomy between rural and urban weakened, in a way that escaping from this urbanity was no longer an option (Benfatti in Benfatti & Schicchi, 2004, p. 9-11). Therefore, the myth of a paradise made of peace and love built over an egalitarian society and without borders begins to sound absolutely anachronistic (Sousa, 2002, p. 17).

The original punk movement, whose stance is closely tied to this complete transformation hitherto hegemonic paradigms in the context of advanced capitalist societies, is, therefore, a result of a new relationship between the urban youth and the city space, structured by negativity. The same can be said about the Brazilian case; however, an important distinction is necessary. While in the cases of New York and London punk is dealing with a circumstantial situation, in Sao Paulo the punk attitude towards the city is related to the very structure of the Brazilian society, it derives from a historical construction. This difference is felt both in terms of sound and of critical content, as will be seen below.

Vivo na cidade: living and alive in the city

The first bands emerged from your need to talk... You heard a song of the Sex Pistols talking about "Anarchy in UK" or "I was on the street in London" and there was no one talking about Carolina's hood, about what was happening with you, talking about you, about what was going on in your reality... (Clemente apud Moreira, 2006).

At the peak of the punk movement in 1977, groups such as the Ramones, Sex Pistols, The Jam, Eddie & The Hot Rods, among others, had some of their songs selected and assembled on the record *A Revista Pop apresenta o Punk Rock* (organized by *Revista Pop*, a magazine and one of the main vehicles of youth culture of the time) which would be the first official record of punk in Brazil.

The advent of punk with its strength and simplicity signalled an opportunity of expression for the marginalized youth, which had been historically excluded of any traditional vehicle of manifestation. "It was the first time the working class decided to organize itself without the 'approval' of the artistic middle class [...] and the first time since the 60s that Brazilian teenagers and youngsters had a common voice amid the darkness of the dictatorship" (Alexander, 2004, p. 62).

⁹ October 30, 1975 (Taylor, 2006, p. 19).

¹⁰ In 1975 the urbanization rate had reached 38.5% of the world population and the number of cities with over five million inhabitants such as London, New York and Sao Paulo, more than tripled

As opposed to the international punk scene, however, the Brazilian movement did not constitute itself as an opposition towards a decadent rock scene, after all, the perspective of Brazilian rock was formed by "diligent poor devils, playing at small theatres, in 'cursed' hours, loading the banner of 'rock' for 200 people a night, with no hits, no money, no decent instruments, no prestige" (Alexander, 2004, p. 62). If there was any opposition, it was towards the MPB [Brazilian Popular Music] whose themes and melodic lines were overly hermetic and "far from the reality of punk and of the subtropical climate of the city the movement lives in" (Bivar, 2001, p. 101). Thus, punk music represented to the peripheral youth a possibility of abstracting its invisibility condition and fulfilling its "legitimate and unconditional desire to express themselves through music" (Alexander, 2004, p. 65).

We found in punk a way of saying everything we wanted, it was something that fitted like a glove. But, if there was no punk, we would find something else, because we needed to put all of those things out (*in* ALEXANDRE, 2004, p. 62).

With the emergence of punk came a recovery of the synthesis in pop music, of the simple, circular and repetitive structure of rock, instantly recognizable and reproducible. This return was a response to the rock music scene of the time, dominated by a growing appreciation of concepts such as musical virtuosity and technicality which was ultimately responsible for the demise of rock'n'roll spontaneity and also made it increasingly unaffordable to the vast majority of urban youth, both in terms of reception and production. But more than a mere return to basics, punk was responsible for radicalizing the principles of rock by incorporating elements of immediate everyday reality. Few power chords, nervous rhythm, maximum distortion effects. In this simple musical structure there was no space for an intricate melodic line so the guitar solos were purged, leaving only one big block of fast, noisy and rhythmic sound in a mimetic relation to the impact of the urban cacophony. If it was not for this, there would be nothing, because life was too short and time was too valuable to spend it learning how to play any supposedly "real" music.

Four really pissed-off guys in black leather jackets. It was like the Gestapo had just walked into the room. These guys were definitely not *hippies*. Then they counted off a song – "ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR!" – and we were hit with this blast of noise, you physically recoiled from the shock of it, like this huge wind, and before I could even get into it, they stopped (McNeil & McCain, 2006, p. 205).

Thus, the brutality of the punk repertoire synthesizes the experience "of the city with its violence, its deterioration as a physical environment. (...) The style is not an artistic condition but personal; a certain needed characterization is assumed in order to cope with the urban reality" (Bassani, 2003, p.113). The punk appropriation of the most degrading aspects of the metropolitan city are present throughout its aesthetics – from music and garment to a behaviour pervaded by a tangible sense of negativity – and also operates as a stylistic device with the purpose of highlighting the reality of life that happens in the depths of the cities. This condition is synthesized by Mark P., editor of the important fanzine *Sniffing Glue*: "no one can define punk rock; it is rock in its lowest form – at a street level" (*apud* Bivar, 2001, p.51).

The specificities of Sao Paulo context accounted for further radicalising both structure and form of punk music, as well as its critical content. Therefore, Brazilian punk music has a very particular accent, determined by an overly accelerated rhythm, a large incorporation of noise and distortion, an extreme short duration of the songs and by the use of a darker tone than New Yorkers and British bands. The lyrics are focused on subjects of denounce on many levels,

from oppression and lack of freedom, to exploitation, unemployment and poverty. The space of the city is a permanent target of criticism; however, their actions and demands cannot happen in any other place than it.

I live in the city/ The air is negative/ The trees are dying/ Concrete surrounds me/ I look at the city, at all of its faces/ Garbage and people mixing together/ I protest to find/ The other side of this life/ I live in the city / Look at the avenues, people lots of people/ They don't express anything, they run nonstop/ I protest to find/ The other side of this life/ I live in the city (Song *Vivo na Cidade* by *Cólera*, 1986).¹¹

In the song *Vivo na Cidade* there is a duplicity of meanings that can be perceived from the word "vivo". In Portuguese it means both "to live in" which contains a sense of being a city dweller; and also "to be alive" in its space, participative and present. This two-layered semantics pervades the Brazilian punk, in which the city is not only the space of the house but also and above all the space of expression about life itself. The urban space appears as the necessary field for the action of appearance [*aparecimento*] (H. Abramo, 1994), operated through the spectacularization of one's own condition. Through the action of public self-exposition, the peripheric youth leaves its zone of invisibility and circumvents its lack of access to the traditional channels of expression – from mainstream media to student movement – making the public space their own platform of expression.

In the case of punk, by appearance H. Abramo (1994, p. 106) understands the public display of signs of shock and provocation, intended to assert, through the very physical presence in space, the existence and necessity of care for certain social problems. Therefore, the appearance draws attention and obliges society to recognize and inquire over issues that would otherwise be submerged. In Sao Paulo, the main spots of gathering and circulation of punks groups are concentrated in the city centre, the areas of maximum visibility. Also "it is that part of town where it still remains the urban aesthetics of the 40s and 50s, with its elegant but decadents buildings [...] The youth turn to the decayed centre to install their new relationship with urbanity and modernity" (H. Abramo, 1994, p. 146).

Sao Paulo has alleys, constructions/ It has Mohawk's punks, Mohawks or not / It has crazy people talking aimlessly/ Sao Paulo is cold weather with sun or drizzle/ Walking by the centre through the crowd/ The Mohawks are protesting, people are passing and looking/ There is all sorts of visuals/ But what matters is the general content/ Sao Paulo is huge/ It is the great underground (Song *São Paulo é Gig* by *Cólera*, 1986).¹²

¹¹ Original Portuguese lyrics: Vivo na cidade/ O ar é negativo/ As árvores vão morrendo/ Concreto a me cercar/ Olho a cidade todas as suas faces/ Lixos e pessoas a se misturar/ Quero protestar para encontrar/ O outro lado desta vida/ Vivo na cidade/ Olhe as avenidas, gente muita gente/ Não expressam nada, correm sem parar/ Quero protestar para encontrar/ O outro lado desta vida/ Vivo na cidade

¹² Original Portuguese lyrics: São Paulo tem becos, tem construções/ Tem punks moicanos, moicanos ou não/ Tem gente louca falando à toa/ São Paulo é frio com sol ou garoa/ Andando pelo centro, pelo formigueiro/ Moicanos protestando, o povo passa olhando/ Tem todo tipo de visual/ Mas o que importa é o conteúdo geral/ São Paulo é gigante/ É o grande underground



Figure 2 - Back cover of the album *Adeus Carne* by *Inocentes*, 1987. The Picture in the sleeve shows the group members standing inside *Catedral da Sé*, a church symbolic of the historic city center of Sao Paulo.

Also, the inauguration of the Metro in this moment reinforced the physical centrality of punk's range of action, since around the stations suddenly appeared a series of public spaces hitherto virtually non-existent and with potential of becoming eventful. This way, new possibilities of action are seen in the city, firstly by the immediate dissolution of territoriality brought by this new kind of fast flows and by the easy access to multiple locations, rendering the city more permeable and accessible; and secondly by the fact that the agglomeration itself can lead to new sorts of cultural developments of this places.

Furthermore, the Metro itself conveys an imagery of an international and cosmopolitan way of life, forging ties between different punk contexts: "in an obviously exaggerated manner that betrayed a certain provincial dazzle, it felt as Sao Paulo was a sister-city of New York" (B. Abramo in Campos, Gama & Sachetta, 2004, p. 193). In this manner, the peripheral youth is no longer restricted to their neighbourhoods of origin; it now belongs to the multiplicity of crowds.

Wandering the streets they try to forget/ All that oppresses them and prevent them from living/
 Maybe forgetting would be the solution/ To dissolve the hatred they have in their hearts/
 The desire to scream is choked in the air/ The fear caused by repression/ All of that tries to prevent
 the suburban boys from existing/ Suburban boys, suburban boys/ You cannot give up on living
 (Song *Garotos do Subúrbio* by *Inocentes*, 1986).¹³

¹³ Original Portuguese lyrics: Vagando pelas ruas tentam esquecer/ Tudo que os oprime e os impedem de viver/ Será que esquecer seria a solução/ Pra dissolver o ódio que eles tem no coração/ Vontade de gritar sufocada no ar/ O medo causado pela repressão/ Tudo isso tenta impedir os garotos do subúrbio de existir/ Garotos do subúrbio, Garotos do subúrbio/ Vocês não podem desistir de viver



Figure 3 - Record inner sleeve of the album *Descanse em Paz* by *Ratos de Porão*, 1986. The Picture shows the group members standing inside a random urban tunnel

The Metro importance in this moment is therefore more symbolic than objective, because even after its installation almost all the daily journeys of punk groups remain being done by bus or by foot. Also, the very act of displacement is appreciated in punk, the promenade as a speculative and subjective experience. Its excursions through the cities underbellies integrate this strategy of appearance; there is an eagerness in knowing new places and overcoming barriers. By exposing itself, punk gains territory and domain over its environment. Thus the spectacle punk is complete:

And the punks are going, in pairs, trios, bunches, like warriors after the battle, all in black uniforms, on foot, from PUC [Pontifical Catholic University] at *Perdizes*, until the *São Bento* square, through *Francisco Matarazzo* and *São João* avenues. Something like 200 punks [...], an impressive theatrical show. [...] And the punk march continues. It's five o'clock in the morning from Saturday to Sunday. The punks are now passing by the corner of *Ipiranga* with *São João* [...]. A little more and they go through the *Paissandu* square, turn, cross the viaduct of *Santa Ifigênia* and gain *São Bento* square. Exhausted but alive. Some fall on the benches and go to sleep, others fall with their girls, cuddled; one will sleep in the school door [...]. And while waiting for the first subway train, they chat and comment the show and the stuff that happened. [...] It dawns, it is Sunday. One by one, everybody is taking their way home. All of them are little more than children and, although they already work, they are still living in their parents' house. But, as it is Sunday, after lunch the punks will be coming back to the square" (Bivar, 2001, pp. 112-114).

Finally, there is a particular appropriation of a subterranean image, the underground, the underworld – a world that cannot be seen. On one hand this comes from the decayed scenarios where inhabits punk's identity: images of wreckage and rubble. "An subterranean venue is also a place apart, as opposed to the normal plan of the city, and by adopting it, these young people want to proclaim their difference" (H. Abramo, 1994, p. 146).

Urban Animal/ Crisis, violence/ Sad existence/ We perform the decay/ Urban Animal/
Subterranean dweller/ Among the rubble and ruins/ Your soul is hungry/ It howls for you (Song
Animal Urbano by *Inocentes*, 1989).¹⁴

¹⁴ Original Portuguese lyrics: Animal urbano/ Crises, violência/ Triste existência/ Realizamos a decadência/
Animal urbano/ Habitante subterrâneo/ Entre escombros e ruínas/ Sua alma está faminta/ Ela uiva por
você

On the other hand, the adoption of this "sub" condition does not mean a detachment from reality or an intention of constructing an alternative social system, but a strategy of giving an even greater emphasis on the reality. In this way, the subterranean could also be situated at the very city centre - the centre of all events, opportunities and attention. This ambivalence is essential and defines all facets of the phenomenon punk, with even greater emphasis on Brazil.

Final considerations

By moving away from a strictly objective and technical study of the urban environment, it is possible to create a more human comprehension of places and spaces, qualifying them in terms of discursively constructed arenas and also apprehending them through a wider web of social relations, thus rendering a more representative reflection of the divisions and tensions present in society. The analysis of the interface between space and music from the point of view of the punk culture in the Brazilian context, allows not only the establishment of a dialogue among different punk panoramas, but also the observation of which considerations over the metropolis are revealed by these different configurations.

Regarding the space of the city, there is in punk phenomena the appropriation of the decay, the marginality and all the perversions that constitute urban life, thus constructing a cultural imagery attuned to the human conditions in the context of the metropolis.

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