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Opening Sequence

Sonic Resistance

In this study I argue that popular music can testify to experiences of diaspora, marginalization and censorship through a sonic form of resistance that operates at the level of narrative structure, auditive composition and performance. To show how such sonic resistance operates, I analyze in some detail a number of songs by marginalized musicians in Cuba after the late 1980s and early 1990s, and in Brazil during the years of the military dictatorship in the early 1970s. Conceiving of songs as complex interactions between lyrics, melody, rhythm, use of instruments (including the voice of the singer) and performance, I focus on how their narrative, auditive and expressive dimensions interact with each other and with the respective Cuban and Brazilian socio-political contexts in which they were written and performed.

In spite of obvious differences between the right-wing technocrat military regime in Brazil and the socialist “Revolutionary” government in Cuba, they both sought to attain political coherence through the construction of a neatly defined national identity.¹ Their political messages were passed on to the people through artistically mediated forms of expression, and music was given a particularly prominent role in this. This meant that, although both the Cuban and the Brazilian authorities exercised strong control over all forms of artistic production, censorship was not only concerned with the prohibition of what they perceived as situated outside officially legitimized discourse, but also with the enforcement

1 In accordance with most of the literature related to Cuban Studies, I will use the word “Revolution” with a capital R in order to refer to the socialist state form and ideology that has marked Cuban politics, entertainment, arts, research and education since the overthrow of the Batista regime in January 1959. I want to emphasize that I am not using the capital R in the same way it is employed in Revolutionary discourse itself. Rather than capitalizing the grandeur of its achievement – without denying the importance it had in its beginning – my capital R stresses the fact that now, almost 52 years later, the word “Revolution” has mostly come to signify the opposite of what the lower-case term “revolution” implies. The analysis of the song “Los Revolucionarios” (2005) by Telmary Diaz in Movement 9 will elaborate on these thoughts.

of what the legitimized discourse should consist of.

Whereas nationalist discourse in both countries was aimed at establishing a clear demarcation between the inside and the outside territory of the nation as a geographically fixed place, the outside world could not be prevented from traversing the interior space. In 1980s and 1990s Cuba, a large part of the population had settled elsewhere, whereas during the dictatorship in Brazil many people were expelled from the country as a result of being charged with subversive activities. Thus, diaspora marked the cultures of both countries as an experience that, I will argue, not only affected the ones who had left, but also those who stayed behind. The way in which people on either side of a physical or discursive separation can continue to touch each other is what I will refer to as *affective diaspora*. Affect here refers to a possibility for resonance between people including their bodies that is independent of direct physical contact. In addition, I consider affect the key factor that permits musical forms of expression to destabilize the rigid inside-outside demarcations the Brazilian and Cuban authorities sought to install and maintain through censorship.

The musicians whose songs are analyzed in what follows all occupy a position that is neither completely internal nor completely external to legitimized nationalist discourse. In the periods concerned, the regimes of both Brazil and Cuba wished to attain hegemonic power by creating a strictly defined image of what was supposed to be part of the nation and its culture, and what was not. Because music was an important tool in the creation of this image, strong control was exercised over what artists produced. My specific focus is on the Cuban *generación de los topos*, "Generation of the Moles" and the Brazilian *margináís*, "marginals" because they both consisted of musicians who consciously occupied marginalized positions within a hegemonic system, seeking to subvert it from the inside. In my analyses of various songs from these musical movements, I introduce the concepts of *detuning*, *strabistic* listening and the *membrane* (as applying to musical performance and perception) to explain how these songs mobilize a form of sonic resistance that is able not just to avoid censorship but also to testify to it and enable listeners to pick up on this.

Cuba and Brazil in Dialogue

Comparative studies of literature, music, cinema and visual or performing arts in Brazil and Cuba are fairly rare. Typically, the comparisons are based on historical or anthropological accounts of the slave-trade legacy in both countries and on similarities between their shared Nigerian socio-religious practices, introduced as a result of the import of slaves from the same African region.² Other common comparisons are concerned with the countries' economic and political histories, but do not thoroughly touch on the cultural practices related to these histories, which exceed the African inheritance.³ Two comparative works that are of importance for the current study are Mariana Martins Villaça's *Polifonia tropical*, which compares musical experimentalism in Cuba and Brazil between 1967 and 1972, and *La experiencia opaca* by Florencia Garramuño, analyzing literary practices during the dictatorial regimes of Argentina and Brazil. Although this last work does not compare Brazil with Cuba, its focus on comparing marginal literary identities in dictatorial Brazil with those in Argentina opens up the possibility of approaching cultural marginality from a transnational perspective.

My comparison between the Cuban *topos* and the Brazilian *margináís* is not based on a direct connection, but focuses on similarities in the dynamics between state interference with artistic production and the way artists dealt

2 Apart from the article by Hernández discussed below, studies that deal with the shared African socio-religious inheritance and histories of slavery of Cuba and Brazil include Laird Bergad's book *The Comparative Histories of slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States* and William Bascom's article "Oba's Ear: A Yoruba Myth in Cuba and Brazil." In Lorand Matory's article "Yorubá: as rotas e as raízes da nação transatlântica, 1830-1950," he repeatedly refers to the ethnographic anthropologist Melville Herskovits and his article "African Gods and Catholic Saints in New World Negro Belief" (1937) as a pioneering work in this particular field. Although Herskovits paved an early path for Cuban-Brazilian comparisons in anthropology, in the present day it is impossible not to be discomforted by his un-nuanced use of terms like "negroes" and "primitive cultures" when referring to African descendants and their socio-religious practices.

3 An exception to this is the work on literary practices related to politics of identity in Cuba and Brazil by Jossianna Arroyo called "Travestismos culturales." A study that focuses on literary production in both countries, albeit directly related to the inheritance of slavery, is Sara Rosell's *La novela antiesclavista en Cuba y Brasil, siglo XIX*. David Denslow's article "Sugar Production in Northeastern Brazil and Cuba, 1858-1908" presents a historical economic comparison of a particular industry.

with this. Nonetheless, for the purpose of contextualization, a few words should be said about the economic relations between Cuba and Brazil, which have a long history of mutual goodwill and cooperation. With the currently improving relationship between the United States and Cuba, the gradual lifting of the embargo and Cuba taking small steps to re-insert itself in the global economy, the relationship between Cuba and Brazil will probably remain important to both countries. This expectation is supported by the fact that Brazil has recently invested in the development of Cuba's Mariel port, creating for itself a strategic hub for export to the Latin American and Caribbean region against an attractive cost per container (Grogg). As Benício Schmidt explains, political and economic relations between Cuba and Brazil became tighter after the Cuban Revolution of 1959, with Brazilian presidents Jânio Quadros (president between January and August 1961) and João Goulart (president from 1961 until 1964) acting as important supporters of the new left-wing state. This situation was interrupted by the military coup and installation of a right-wing regime in Brazil in 1964. After the fall of this regime in 1978, friendly encounters between Cuban and Brazilian politicians were resumed. Official diplomatic relations, however, were not reinstated until 1986 (Schmidt 152-54). For this reason my study focuses primarily on a period in time in which Cuba and Brazil were not maintaining official relations.

Widening the historical perspective on the similarities between Cuba and Brazil, the period of the slave trade is a painful yet important shared experience, as both countries were primary destinations for slaves from the regions of Nigeria and Benin, brought over in order to work on the sugar plantations. Consequently, the Yoruba culture of this region in Africa became an important element in religious and artistic forms of expression in both countries, as is still visible in the religious practice of *santería* in Cuba and *candomblé* in Brazil (Hernández 143-44). The strong similarity of these religions is not only visible in religious expressions, but also in cultural forms born from them. In music, this is manifest primarily in the use of similar rhythms and instruments in musical styles such as Brazilian samba and Cuban rumba, but elements of this inheritance have also been integrated into more contemporary musical currents. One example is the "mangue beat" style of the group Chico Science & Nação Zumbi from Recife in Brazil, which, in their song "Malungo," they characterize as "hip hop e *batucada*"

(Agerkop 156). Others are the “rockasón” crossover by Cuban rock band Lucha Almada and the “funky blues *con guaguancó*” experiments of the Cuban rock/pop project Habana Abierta, whose participants, including the members of Lucha Almada, all migrated to Spain in order to record and perform their music free from the restrictions imposed by the Cuban government censors (Pijpers 2008: 43).

In her aforementioned book Martins Villaça argues a link can be made between Cuban left-wing cultural politics and Brazilian control of artistic production after the military coup by right-wing technocrats in spite of the vast political differences between the regimes. She points out how the formulation of cultural politics by the Brazilian communist party before the coup had stressed the importance of a popular revolutionary art form whose political message could become accessible to the masses by structuring it according to popular and familiar formulas (Martins Villaça 69). It was this policy that was implemented after the coup of 1964, using mass media to give art – and music in particular – a wider audience among the people whose views could supposedly be influenced by it. In Cuban cultural politics after the Revolution music was similarly conceived of as an artistic form of expression capable of cementing the relationship between the left-wing Revolutionary state and the people. Referring to the Cuban discourse that sought to define the function of the music in relation to the socialist project, Martins Villaça quotes the words of Ernesto Che Guevara in his book *El socialismo y el hombre en Cuba*: “ya vendrán los Revolucionarios que entonen el canto del hombre nuevo con la auténtica voz del pueblo,” ‘the Revolutionaries will come who sing the new man’s song with the authentic voice of the people’ (59). Thus, in both military-ruled Brazil and post-Revolutionary Cuba, music became the principal medium through which the desired image of a newly defined national identity was passed on to the people.

Fidel Castro, in his 1961 speech “Palabras a los intelectuales,” defined the role of art and censorship in Cuba as follows: “*dentro de la Revolución, todo. Contra la Revolución, nada,*” which may be translated as “within the Revolution, everything. Against the Revolution, nothing.” This formulation resonates with the way in which Brazilian musicians were critiqued by the political left if their music did not show enough political engagement. I will analyze the implications of this definition of art and censorship in Part 3 of this study. Here, it is invoked to

indicate how a lack of political engagement in music was considered to be an act against the Revolutionary authorities in Cuba, whereas in Brazil, after the tightening of state control in 1967, censorship applied to artistic forms of expression that gave the impression of being politically engaged. For the politically left groups in Brazil, consequently, an absence of political content in art was seen as an act of siding with capitalist ideology and hence with the military regime. Related to this, developments in Brazilian music that had always been disapproved of by left-wing critics included the integration of jazz in early *bossa-nova*, the use of electrical guitars in so-called “*iê-iê-iê*” music and the adaptation of influences from European rock music in many compositions of the Tropicalistas.⁴ These musical styles were seen to serve as mere entertainment for the masses and to allow the authenticity of Brazilian musical traditions to be contaminated by foreign styles (Martins Villaça 71-5).

During their first years in power, the Brazilian military authorities did not yet provide a very strict definition of their ideological framework. This created the conditions for the left-wing legacy of Brazilian cultural politics to become integrated into the post-coup military cultural politics, causing politically engaged music to be considered an important vehicle for getting the desired image of a Brazilian national identity across to the masses. However, the prominent presence of music programming on radio and television not only served to spread the political message of the authorities but provided an accidental platform for subversive artists. This caused the Brazilian popular music movement MPB (*Musica Popular Brasileira*), which was closely related to the South-American protest song known as “*la canción nueva*,” ‘the new song,’ to become a platform for fairly expressive and militant criticism that was surprisingly present and popular in the Brazilian musical scene even during the dictatorship (Martins Villaça 71).

It is important to elaborate on these details at this stage because they allow me to outline the shared field of tension in which Cuban and Brazilian

4 The name “*iê-iê-iê*” was used to indicate a style of Brazilian music influenced by North-American and European pop music of the 1960s, with the Beatles as the most prominent role model. The name is an onomatopoeic rendition of the words from the refrain of “*She Loves You*” by the Beatles: “*she loves you, yeah yeah yeah*” (Martins Villaça 75). Singer Roberto Carlos is considered the founder and most famous representative of this particular style (Cambráia Naves 48).

musicians were operating, in spite of the obvious differences in the politics and state form of both countries, which should not be forgotten. The Brazilian military coup was a shift in power that was imposed according to a top-down principle. The main focus of the technocrats who defined the new political and economic strategy was the insertion of Brazil into the globalized economy and the boosting of production without specific consideration of the working class (Treece 311). Cuba's left-wing politics and Revolutionary state form, in contrast, were the result of an insurgency against a dictatorship. It triumphed with the help of large groups of the population, including students and both the urban and agrarian working classes. The primary concern of the freshly installed Revolutionary authorities was the nationalization of capital and the empowerment of formerly marginalized groups (Martins Villaça 55). In other words, where Cuban Revolutionary politics and notions of social reform were strongly inspired by socialist models from the Soviet Union, according to which state power could be secured through the education and mobilization of the people, the Brazilian military politics of economical reform were aimed at maximizing production and stimulating economical growth, with the masses mainly seen as "manpower" whose cooperation with the system could be enforced by the authorities (Martins Villaça 55-9).

Yet both Cuba and Brazil operated on the basis of a clearly centralized power structure and a strong nationalist discourse. Nationalism, according to Hannah Arendt's article "The Nation," denotes "the conquest of the state through the nation" in which power becomes tied to a specific territory. And the state, "as a legal institution [which] has declared that it must protect the rights of men," restricts the specificity of this protection to "nationals" (208). In such a system, regardless of the difference between inward-directed Cuban politics and the Brazilian desire to open up to a globalized market-economy, one's legitimacy as a "national" is defined by an inside-outside dichotomy of either belonging or not belonging to a national identity and territory. In late 1980s and early 1990s Cuba and 1970s Brazil, censorship was put in place to strictly define the norms of this national identity, first of all according to the politically engaged attitude to which artists were supposed to abide, as discussed above, and second by recurring to certain culturally embedded images. As I will discuss in more detail below, Carnival in Brazil and the image of "el Hombre Nuevo" in Cuba became

blueprints for what national identity should look like and how it should be reaffirmed in music and other forms of artistic expression.

What is particularly relevant about this strategy of appealing to a national identity based upon certain cultural norms and habits that were already embedded in Cuban and Brazilian day-to-day life is that it suggests an effort on the part of centralized power to become hegemonic. I mean this in Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's sense of a system where "pure exteriority is impossible" because it "also embraces what opposes [it]" (111, 139). The selection of art forms and imagery that appealed to the majority of the population not only made it possible to have people incorporate politics on an affective level, minimizing their distance to centralized power, but it also articulated its hegemony on the basis of cultural forms of expression that were already part of people's day-to-day lives.

In Cuba, where the Revolutionary state was established with the consent of a large part of the population, political power was easily incorporated in daily life on an affective level. This power only began to be questioned on a larger scale after a second generation of people, born after the Revolution, started distancing themselves from the burden of the Revolutionary commitment. In Brazil, where military rule was imposed through a coup, left-wing cultural politics were maintained as a way of attaining hegemony because the people had already incorporated these forms of artistic and cultural expression. As Beasley-Murray notes, "hegemony theory presents social order as the result of either coercion or consent," but, he adds, "pure coercion is unthinkable, so hegemony theory posits that there is always at least a residue of willed acquiescence" (63).

Because it was the hegemonic characteristics of the Cuban and Brazilian regimes that sought to establish political power on the affective level, music's potential for sonic resistance to censorship is not to be found only in lyrics that – either explicitly or through the use of metaphors – critique centralized power. As Laclau and Mouffe remind their readers in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, any articulation of opposition in a hegemonic system "is defined by the internal parameters of the [hegemonic] formation itself" (139). For this reason I will not primarily focus on expressions of explicit criticism but rather on particular narrative structures or forms of sonic and performative expression that seem to defy hegemony on another level than that of plain opposition.

Of course, the use of lyrics that were considered too critical was punished in both countries with different levels of severity. Where Revolutionary Cuba is known for large-scale incarcerations of “prisioneros de consciencia” and alleged torture, Brazil’s military forces operated a punishment system based on imprisonment, expulsion, torture and murder. As I will show, to avoid these oppressive measures, subversive musicians followed the same strategy as that pursued by the state authorities aspiring for hegemony by operating precisely on the affective level. This level, which, in addition to the narrative content of the lyrics, comprises the song’s sonic characteristics and its performance situation, appeals to emotions and cultural memory. They trigger a physical response by touching directly on the body instead of working through intellect and reason.

Before elaborating further on how I will analyze the affective impact of specific Cuban and Brazilian songs as part of a strategy of sonic resistance, I give an overview of the relevant socio-historical contexts in Cuba and Brazil in which the songs selected for analysis were written and performed.

Cuba and the “Generation of the Moles”

The sold-out concert by marginalized Cuban artist Carlos Varela in Habana’s Chaplin Theater in April 1989 was an exceptional event when taking into account the circumstances under which he and the other musicians of his generation operated as *cantautores* (Borges Triana 2009: 41-2).⁵ Together with Varela, musicians such as Santiago Feliú, Frank Delgado, Xiomara Laugart and Gerardo Alfonso could only be active in a relatively underground music scene because the sometimes critical attitude towards Cuban society they took in their music did not accord with the message the authorities wanted musicians to spread. They were hardly given any airplay on the radio or on television, and their concerts had to

5 Instead of the English hyphenated term of “singer-songwriter,” indicating someone who writes and sings his or her own songs, I use the Spanish term *cantautor*, a contraction between *cantante* (‘singer’) and *autor* (‘author’). The inclusion of the word for “author” invests the song lyrics with a more literary value than “songwriting” as a process exclusively legitimized in relation to music or, worse, to the mass production of songs based on success formulas in the popular music industry.

be arranged through an informal circuit and take place in small venues (Pijpers 2007, 1). Of the four, Feliú and Varela had most exposure to bigger audiences as Silvio Rodríguez, their musical mentor from an earlier generation, whose fame had already been established, regularly invited them as support acts at his own concerts. That Varela managed to become so popular that he was able to fill the Chaplin and the Carlos Marx Theaters of Havana, in spite of his almost complete absence from official – state controlled – media channels was therefore not only because he managed to “capture the spirit of the younger generation,” as Borges Triana convincingly argues, but also thanks to Rodríguez’s promotional efforts (Borges Triana 2009: 42; Moore 162).

Varela’s enormous popularity laid bare the authorities’ preoccupation with artists who, in expressing criticism of the Revolutionary regime and of contemporary society, captured the general – yet practically unspoken – view of a large part of the Cuban population. Eyewitness reports of concerts by Varela in these years note that the police used to block all connecting roads to the theater, denying hundreds of people access to the concert. Inside, large parts of the audience consisted of state officials and previously instructed high school students who had been transported there shortly before the show started. The instructions given to these students during their bus trip to the theater stressed the need to keep the ambience reasonably calm and to report any suspicious behavior to the school staff or UJC presidents.⁶

Taking a few steps back to draw the bigger picture of the circumstances

6 Although no written sources testify to this episode, various people who, as students, were surprised at the end of a school day with an excursion to a Carlos Varela concert have told me about their experiences. The abbreviation UJC stands for “Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas,” ‘Young Communist Union,’ whose ‘presidents’ are specially selected, well-performing students (Martins Villaça 49). Between January and July in 2004 when I followed courses at the University of Havana I had conversations with both UJC members and other students who had rejected membership. I learned that, officially, the function of the UJC is to maintain Revolutionary political awareness and dedication within Cuba’s educational institutions. To this aim, it demands the organisation of and visible presence at political rallies from its members. In practice, however, the UJC has turned into an inconvenient obligation for many students, as it takes up a lot of time that cannot be dedicated to studying. Voluntary applications are scarce, and in many cases the students who do join the UJC voluntarily do so in order to have less difficulty in obtaining the documents required to travel abroad – not rarely with the aim of leaving Cuba to build a life elsewhere.

in which Varela and the *cantautores* of his generation received their education as musicians, it is important to note that ever since the Cuban Revolution in 1959 relations between musicians and state authorities had not been without conflict: the authorities did their best to include young generations of musicians in their political project without being able to control them completely. State Revolutionary discourse focused strongly on the empowerment of formally marginalized groups and the creation of “el hombre nuevo,” ‘the new man,’ who, according to Ernesto Che Guevara, was the Cuban man of the future mirroring the discipline and dedication of the combatants who, under Castro’s and Guevara’s guidance, had overthrown the Batista regime. In his 1965 text “El socialismo y el hombre en Cuba,” Guevara mentions a capacity for and dedication to disciplined self-education as one of the key characteristics of this new man (4).⁷ He adds that only the (self-) education of this vanguard figure makes him capable of sacrifice because he understands its urgency within the bigger picture of the political struggle of which he partakes (Guevara 7). This sacrifice, according to Guevara, also includes the willingness to live without luxury if this is required in the struggle against an enemy (12).⁸ These characteristics of the *hombre nuevo*

7 In these fragments, it is noticeable that the discourse of Revolutionary Cuba is masculinist in an unquestioned and restrictive way. In her article “Participación vs Identidad,” Cecilia Bobes explains that although social and economic equality between men and women increased after the Revolution, stimulating the participation of women in social and political life, there was nevertheless an absence of feminist or female-centered discourse until the late 1980s due to the general taboo on discourses emphasizing any group’s desired separation from the homogeneous mass posited by early Revolutionary discourse (112). Abel Sierra Madero’s book *Del otro lado del espejo* about (homo)sexuality and the construction of a Cuban national identity analyzes the role of Cuba’s “new man” discourse in post-Revolutionary policies concerning homosexuality. As an example, he states that homosexuals were supposed to mobilize their self-control in order to act “according to socially established norms of cohabitation” and that homosexuals were denied access to jobs as teachers or political leaders because they were considered “unable to act convincingly as role models in front of their students” (Madero 200, my translations).

8 The emphasis on the capacity to resist the temptation of luxury is also related to a discourse of the political left in Latin America that Pablo Rodríguez Ruiz, in *Los marginales de las Alturas del Mirador*, describes as “the dignifying of the poor” (20). As he explains, this discourse not only serves the empowerment of marginalized groups, but also the goal of pacifying possibly antagonistic groups in society by emphasizing how poverty is a matter of choice in a society where marginalized groups are no longer excluded from political discourse (Rodríguez Ruiz 23-4). Rodríguez Ruiz’s study provides further information on marginal culture in Havana and constitutes a rare inquiry from

also constituted the guidelines for the musicians who, as noted in the discussion above, were expected to pass on the political message of the Revolution to the people. What was born from this educated and humble role model was the new concept of the Cuban *trovador*.

The musicians from this first generation of *trovadores* included Silvio Rodríguez, Pablo Milanés, Noel Nicola and Sara González. Their education as musicians and as young Cuban nationals growing up in the early years of the socialist, Revolutionary state caused them to live by the example of the *hombre nuevo* in the sense that they were well-educated and politically engaged. In 1966, the poet Guillermo Rodríguez Rivera wrote the manifesto “nos pronunciamos,” ‘we speak up,’ which he signed together with other poets such as Víctor Casaus, Luis Rogelio Contreras and Jesús Díaz. It declared that they would make art “of, from and for the Revolution,” implying, besides political engagement, that art should deal not only with elevated matters but also with supposedly base everyday issues: “we consider all words to fit in the poetic vocabulary, be it dick or heart” (Rodríguez Rivera 11).⁹ According to López Sánchez, the manifesto caused the young poets and *trovadores* to come together because of their shared ideas about poetic and political aestheticism (49). This active mutual engagement manifests itself in the poetic and narrative complexity of *trova* song lyrics after the Revolution.

Because the *trova* after 1959 was not only about intellectualism and politics but also about the expression of everyday emotions and themes, the young *trovadores* soon reached a broad audience. In Cuba the term *trovador*, reminiscent of the wandering *troubadour* in medieval Europe, became associated with the image of the poet and his guitar (Palmer 1988: 301). The appeal of this humble figure caused the young musicians – in particular Rodríguez and Milanés – to become immensely popular not just among students and intellectuals, but also among the urban and agrarian working classes (Pijpers 2006: 57). As the state authorities recognized the strategic value of their popularity, the young musicians were given

a Cuban perspective into marginality and racial questions in relation to Cuban socialist politics.

9 My translation from Spanish: “Consideramos que toda palabra cabe en la poesía, sea carajo o corazón.”

a place to develop their activities in the Casa de Las Américas in Havana and state funding for concerts and instruments. In 1972, this support was formalized with the inauguration of the “Nueva Trova Movement,” or MNT for *Movimiento de la Nueva Trova*, which converted the Movement into a nation-wide platform to support and educate young musicians (López Sánchez 63, 71).

The institutionalization of the MNT as a state-funded movement not only meant financial and promotional advantages for the musicians, but also implied certain norms and expectations with respect to the content of their song lyrics. According to Noel Nicola in an interview included in López Sánchez’s book, the main problem of the young MNT musicians was the bureaucrats not understanding that their affiliation with the Revolution was of an aesthetic nature, not merely a political one (158-59). In other words, the Revolutionary authorities did not fully accept the *hombre nuevo* that emerged from the MNT.

Towards the late 1980s, the musicians mentioned at the start of this section made their first public appearances on stage, marking a new tendency in Cuban *trova* music. Carlos Varela, Gerardo Alfonso, Frank Delgado and Santiago Feliú were all born after 1959 and were considered to represent the second generation of the Nueva Trova.¹⁰ Although the MNT founders had trained them as musicians, the young *trovadores* started to differentiate themselves from their mentors mainly because they no longer shared the same sense of involvement with the Revolutionary project.

The years of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, one of Cuba’s most important political and economical allies in a divided world, were characterized

10 The division of artistic tendencies into “generations” is a common classifier in post-Revolutionary Cuban sociological and literary theory, and is also used for the classification of musical movements. See, for example, Amir Valle Ojeda’s work on literary movements in the Cuban 80s and 90s, *Brevísimas demencias*, Antonio López Sánchez’s *La Canción de la Nueva Trova* and Joaquín Borges Triana’s *CONcierto Cubano*. Because this study does not aim to elaborate an alternative classifying system, I will use the division of “first” and “second” generation in the *Nueva Trova* without questioning the discourse of “newness” in the post-revolutionary musical tradition. For research exposing some clearly distinguishable period-specific characteristics of different generations of writers, see Salvador Redonet’s introduction to *Los últimos serán los primeros*, ‘the last ones will be the first,’ an anthology of short stories by young Cuban writers of the late 1980s (published in 1993) and Margarita Mateo Palmer’s *Ella escribía poscrítica*, ‘She Wrote Post-Criticism’ (published in 1995), about postmodernism in Cuban literature since the late 1980s, which also includes a chapter on the musicians from the *topos* generation.

by economical hardship and a growing silent disgruntlement with the political situation in Cuba. The economic situation in the country had been precarious since the U.S. trade embargo imposed after 1962 (Morley 237).¹¹ However, it was with the Mariel crisis in 1980 that the most visible manifestation of public dissent occurred as a large group of people entered the Peruvian embassy to obtain permission to leave Cuba. Confronted with an unstoppable flow, the Revolutionary authorities designated the port of Mariel as the place from where the “escoria” or “scum” that wished to leave could embark for the United States. This resulted in the exodus, within a year, of approximately 125 Million Cubans who left in search of better economical conditions or, in the case of artists such as the writer Reinaldo Arenas, a place where they could enjoy more freedom of expression (Pedraza 318; Armengol). In 1990, when, a year after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the scarcity of resources in Cuba reached a historical high, Fidel Castro, in a speech at the Carlos Marx theater, appealed to the fighting spirit and the unity of the Cuban people for the difficult years to come, which he coined as a “período especial en tiempos de paz,” ‘special period in times of peace’ (Castro 1990, 1).

Castro’s appeal for unity and dedication to the Revolution did not resonate with all parts of Cuban society. Particularly the younger generations, who, like the musicians of the second generation of the Nueva Trova, had been born after the Revolution, did not feel the same affinity with the Revolutionary project as earlier generations. Two cultural objects testify to this generational gap: the first is the 1959 poem “El otro” by Roberto Fernández Retamar, and the second is the poem “Generación,” written by Ramón Fernández Larrea in 1987 (Sánchez Aguilera 43-4). Where Retamar poses the question about his indebtedness to the martyrs of the Revolution with the words “nosotros, los sobrevivientes / a quiénes debemos la sobrevivencia?” ‘we, the survivors / to whom do we owe our survival?’ Larrea answers this question nearly three decades later with the words “nosotros, los sobrevivientes, a nadie debemos la sobrevivencia,” ‘we, the survivors, owe our survival to nobody’ (Aguilera Díaz 29).

11 For further reading on the events surrounding the imposition of the Cuban trade embargo during and after the missile crisis of 1962, see Morris Morley’s *Imperial State and Revolution*. Written during the late years of the Cold War, it offers a meticulous account of the details of U.S. politics, though leaving the Cuban perspective largely out of the equation.

In the same way, the second Nueva Trova generation no longer saw it as their duty to defend the cause their parents had fought for or to endure the ongoing difficulties resulting from that struggle. In their song lyrics they no longer agreed to omit – for the sake of the censors – some very present aspects of their daily lives, and they started to sing about the friends and family members who had fled to the U.S. and who were not supposed to be mentioned in public. Thus, in Frank Delgado's song "La otra orilla," 'the other shore,' on his 1997 album *La Habana está de bala*, the lives of Cubans living in Havana and Miami are presented as not so different from each other in spite of the contrasting political and economic circumstances. Nevertheless, both "shores" of this single realm constituting Cuban diasporic space are kept invisible to each other in public and political discourse. In this context, the lyrical subject wonders why his aunts and uncles, in spite of their ceaseless presence in his family's memory, cannot be mentioned in public places "because they have abandoned their people."

Another emblematic song that captures the spirit of this period is Carlos Varela's "Guillermo Tell." It became a symbol for a new generation that started to make itself heard through a discourse of implicit criticism that defied censorship. Through this discourse the younger generation of *trovadores* gave expression to a sensation of distance and alienation from the society they were meant to be a part of and which, according to the normative standards of the Cuban Revolution, they were supposed to construct and protect unconditionally. "Guillermo Tell," narrating an alternative version of the story of William Tell in which the son refuses to always be the one with the apple on his head, captured the general sense of distance that the young generation of Cubans experienced in relation to the society their 'fathers' had created.¹²

Because of this detachment from the Revolutionary ideal, it was no longer possible for the state authorities to exercise indirect subtle control over these musicians by incorporating them in their own machinery of ideological expression. Censorship now consisted in ensuring the almost complete absence of these musicians from all forms of media, and in denying them any spaces to perform or record. Nonetheless, the musicians managed to continue their activities and

¹² In Movements 4 and 5 of this study I will analyze this song in detail, reflecting on how its lyrical content and performative characteristics both represent and defy censorship.

to gain popularity in an underground scene by performing for small groups at home and in public spaces such as parks and deserted theaters, and by recording albums with foreign labels. Because of this, they were given the name “*la generación de los topos*,” ‘generation of the moles,’ referring metaphorically to their underground activities (Borges Triana 1988: 1).

Carlos Varela’s 1989 performance in one of Havana’s biggest theaters was a sign that his popularity could no longer be ignored. The concert program consisted of songs he had written over the years, which he finally managed to record in Spain. His very activity as a musician, then, was a symptom of his detachment from his contemporary social and political environment. More literally, the concert and Varela’s *En vivo* album (1991), which was a recording thereof, are examples of how the outside world filtered into Cuban culture in spite of the island’s apparent geographical and political isolation. Although Cuba’s outside world was a taboo, a place that officially did not exist, it was still manifestly there, changing not only musical activity, but also the way in which these musicians perceived their homeland.

Consequently, the marginal status of the *topos* did not render them fully invisible, but rather provided society’s margins with a face and voice. The *topos* showed that Cuban society’s “outside” also occupied certain spaces on the island, within the capital, and that it shaped a generation’s discourse and sonic fingerprint. This inherent multiplicity of the homeland in which the outside realm permeates the inside space – not only in terms of the presence of different political influences or the visibility of other geographical spaces but also in terms of the unavoidable underground, fringes and black-spots of the society itself – is what makes it possible to approach diaspora by focusing on marginal musicians located inside Cuba and Brazil. Showing that no physical separation is needed for people to become alienated from their homeland, and that the definition of a society’s inside or legitimized realm may be cannibalized from the inside, I argue that marginality within the homeland is also a diasporic experience, specifically an affective one.

Brazil's *marginália*

Two decades before Varela's concert at the Chaplin theater, in July 1969, the Brazilian musicians Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil gave a last concert in the city of Salvador in order to collect the money that would pay for their one-way trip to London. Having completed a four-month prison term, the two most prominent personalities of the *Tropicália* movement were forced to leave the country on the charge of "subversive musical activities" (Cabraia Naves 56-57). Gil's and Veloso's departure from Brazil marked the end of *Tropicália* as an influential artistic and musical movement in Brazil, and can be considered as the start of what will be explained below as *marginália*. The early 1970s are often referred to as an era of "vazio cultural," 'cultural emptiness' due to the fact that many artists disappeared from view because they had left the country, had been incarcerated or simply kept a low profile in order to avoid persecution.

In his Master's thesis "Eu, Brasileiro, confesso minha culpa e meu pecado," Frederico Coelho contests the "vazio cultural" terminology by arguing that during these years the production of magazines, movies, books of poetry and music albums did not stop, but took place in marginal, underground circuits instead of through the state-supported channels of mass media (163). It is important to focus here on how *marginália* relates to *Tropicália* not just because *Tropicália* has exercised a strong influence on Brazilian music from the 1960s until the present day, but, more importantly, because these musical currents have a similar way of dealing with – and being dealt with by – censorship.

Returning to Gil's and Veloso's expulsion from Brazil, the question arises what their musical activities had consisted of to make them so threatening in the eyes of the military authorities. As argued above, the censors' response to *Tropicália* is surprising considering that the MPB musicians, who were much more explicitly critical and militant in their song lyrics, were not harshly prosecuted. This suggests that besides the contents of the lyrics, the performative characteristics of their music, through which most of the *Tropicália* values were visually expressed, was considered important by the censors. The complex dynamics between artists and state censors can be clarified by taking a closer look at the strict censorship of music and other artistic, intellectual or cultural expressions implemented in

March 1968 with the fifth Institutional act ('AI-5').¹³

The military coup of 1964 had put an end to the popular-nationalist politics of the Goulart administration. Instead, a form of capitalism was imposed that was to insert Brazil into the world economy. As David Treece explains in *The Gathering of Voices* (co-written with Mike Gonzalez), the first years of military rule in Brazil were dedicated to the consolidation of the regime. Consequently, some semi-democratic mechanisms continued to exist in spite of the increasing centralization of political power. In 1968, however, a new coup within the existing one marked the beginning of an era of severe repression of the working classes, designed to attain maximum productivity in a move towards industrialization. In the pursuit of an "economic miracle," all methods that could ensure economical growth were allowed, giving the authorities absolute power over possible subversive elements in Brazilian society, including the cultural scene (Treece 307-312).

The state authorities, after the military coup of 1964, did promote all cultural expressions that emphasized Brazil's modernity and its insertion in the global economy, using mass media channels to spread an image of a harmonious and modern Brazilian identity that was closely related to the carnival celebration as it was being invented during the Vargas era and as we still know it today.¹⁴

13 The content of this institutional act, which concerns the application of censorship in Brazil, will be discussed in detail in Movement 12.

14 In "Tango, Samba, Modernity and Nation," Florencia Garramuño points to the sometimes contradictory way in which Latin American modernity draws on what was conceived as "primitivist imagery" in the creation of a modern, national identity. Although the decades of industrialization (the 1920s and 1930s) were characterized by an emphasis on the modern character of the nation, the particularities of this national identity were mostly expressed, in literature, poetry and music, through what Garramuño describes as a combination of "the primitive and the modern" (2007: 1). Whereas Garramuño refers primarily to samba in Brazil and tango in Argentina as instances where the inheritance of African counterhythmic musical structures was absorbed and redefined in national music styles, she also links this tendency to the concept of anthropophagy as it was developed in Brazilian modernism. In 1928 the Brazilian poet Oswald de Andrade introduced the idea of cannibalism to illustrate how a new Brazilian identity could only consist of devouring and digesting the European inheritance according to indigenous traditions. He argued that this act of physical absorption would allow Brazil to create something truly new and of its own rather than simply copying artistic traditions or economic models from overseas. See De Andrade's "Manifesto antropófago," the introduction to the first number of the *Revista de Antropofagia*. For further reading on modernity and literary modernism in Brazil, see Saulo Gouveia's *The Triumph of Brazilian Modernism*.

Under the rule of Getúlio Vargas, from 1934 until 1945 and then again from 1950 until 1954, samba had been promoted as the official national music that, through the “ritual” of carnival, symbolized the mix of African, Indigenous and Portuguese cultures that had resulted in the modern Brazilian identity. Samba-schools, or *blocos*, were given the role of relating Brazilian history through thematic representations performed in samba processions. These representations emphasized how the Portuguese (white) victory over minority groups had resulted in the modernization of the country. At the same time, carnival also became a folkloristic cliché aimed at the expansion of the tourist industry.

In this context, the musical style of *Tropicália*, which mixed elements of international commercial rock and pop music with Brazilian *Bossa Nova*, was turned into a product that aligned with the new Brazilian national identity the military junta wished to construct. The internationally oriented popular element served the image of Brazil as a culture with a global orientation, whereas the *Bossa Nova* element had already proven to be a successful musical formula abroad, providing an apprehensible mix between “folkloric” elements and subtle jazz influences. Because the military authorities initially promoted this music, which could give international recognition to Brazil’s supposed harmonious confluence between “exotic” and “western” sounds, the Tropicalistas were given a lot of exposure in the mass-media. This visibility made it possible for them to earn their popularity, but also made them dangerous in the eyes of the regime (Treece 311-314).

The *Tropicália* attitude of aesthetical non-commitment soon opened them up to attacks from the political and artistic left and right. For the traditionalist groups on the political left, the use of the electrical guitar and of melodic and rhythmic structures seen to belong to North American or European pop music constituted an intrusion of imperialist elements into the “pureness” of the Brazilian cultural tradition. Right-wing groups, including the military, objected to the fact that *Tropicália* also used the rhythms and melodies of folk songs of the rural *Nordeste* (Brazil’s poorest state). According to them, the pursued image of modernity and progress was being jeopardized by this musical “contamination” with “primitive” elements of Brazilian culture (Treece 315-16). In a pursuit that was never understood by left- or right-wing groups, *Tropicália* aimed to create a

Brazilian music with a potential for constant renewal that was not impeded by the rigidity of historical or cultural legitimization, or by the limitations of a binary discourse that divided culture into “high” (erudite) and “low” (primitive/popular) forms of expression.

The music of *Tropicália*, as noted above, explores the cultural richness of Brazilian music and does so in a non-hierarchical way, combining musical styles that were created in the rural areas of Brazil – such as *fórró* – with rock instruments and lyrics that could be Concretista poems (Cabraia Naves 57-63). Poetry by the Brazilian Concretistas expressed a fascination with a poem’s typographic layout, related to the country’s rush to industrialization. A typical poem of the Concretismo movement only refers in a visual way to its own content (Treece 309). An example of a song resembling Concretista poetry is “Batmacumba,” by the group Os Mutantes on the *Tropicália* project debut-album *Tropicália: Ou panis et circensis* from 1968. In this song, every consecutive verse cuts a syllable at the end of the verse “Batmacumba-yeye, Batmacumba-oba.” When only “Bat” remains, syllables are added one by one, until the verse is complete again. The lyrics of “Batmacumba” can be considered a Concretista poem, because, when written out completely, they resemble the shape of a bat. At the same time, a clear Tropicalista element in this song is the contraction of “Batman” and “macumba” (a word that refers to the practice of African spirit worship in Brazil). This allows the song to reflect on Brazil’s hybrid reality between (global-oriented) modernization and (local) tradition.¹⁵

In the case of *marginália*, there is a thematic tendency towards violence, poverty and death, aspects that are closely related to life in the favelas, and also to madness. These aspects of social exteriority constitute both the physical and symbolic locus of Brazilian (artistic) marginality. *Marginália* is not so much concerned with the construction of a new form of Brazilian identity through music, but departs from the idea of a non-identity situated on the outer limits of aesthetic and cultural norms – and, in the case of the favelas, even beyond the limits of juridical and civil representation. Also, *marginália*’s stylistic tendency towards rock or jazz does not necessarily strive to enrich the Brazilian musical tradition,

15 For a detailed account of Concretista poetry in Brazil in relation to Brazilian history but also placed in dialogue with contemporary poetical movements in other Latin American countries, see *The Gathering of Voices* by David Treece and Mike Gonzalez.

as was the case in *Tropicália* and, before that, *Bossa Nova*. Instead, it evinces an outward look through which the younger generations of musicians take a certain distance from Brazilian culture as it was represented by the military propaganda. In this propaganda, Brazil's rich cultural and ethnical history was simplified into what Hélio Oiticica, a prominent representative of *marginália*, calls a "folklorized" image of a historical course that had supposedly culminated in the contemporary (predominantly white Portuguese) harmonious modern nation (115). At the same time, all associations with existing poverty were silenced and musicians or intellectuals who refused to spread this ideal image were jailed or expelled. More than just a way of avoiding censorship, for Oiticica, marginality was a way of refusing to commit to what was officially legitimate.

The young artists of *marginália* returned to what they consider to be their cultural roots by deconstructing the historical meaning attributed to certain styles of music in the larger context of a constructed Brazilian cultural identity. Their use of these musical styles allows a reconsideration of the role these musical styles can play in an alternative moment of cultural self-definition by voices that do not necessarily represent the centralized and centralizing power of the state authorities. For example, the iconic musician of *marginália* Jards Macalé, on his second album *Aprender a Nadar* (1974), uses extensive fragments from old songs of the melodramatic *samba-canção* in a sometimes contrasting, sometimes complementary dialogue with this music style from his position as a musician with a rock and jazz background.¹⁶

A similar practice of cultural alienation is used by the group Novos Baianos, whose members eventually created a commune in the countryside and in this way

16 The complete title of the album, *Apresenta a Linha de Morbeza Romantica em Aprender a Nadar*, which is simply referred to as *Aprender a Nadar*, announces how, on this album, "Jards Macalé Presents the Trend of Morbid Romance." "*Samba-canção*" is the name of a subgenre in the samba tradition in which more emphasis is put on the lyrics and melody than on the rhythmic, danceable character. Although the first compositions of the slower *samba-canção* date from as early as the 1920s, it was in the 1950s that the genre became more popular and occupied a proper space within the samba tradition. Its main characteristics are its orchestral compositions with elaborated melodic structures that resemble the Cuban and Mexican *boleros*, while the lyrics are predominantly sentimental, mostly mourning a lost love (Cambraia Naves 21-2). *Samba-canção, fratura e paixão* by Beatriz Borges offers further insight into this genre in the context of a discussion of the use of kitsch in Brazilian music.

distanced themselves from the city as a space that symbolized authoritative order and thus repression. Originally a rock band, Novos Baianos returned to samba music on their album *Acabou Chorare* (1972). Avoiding the discourse of historical legitimization, they re-discovered the genre from the outside-in perspective of performers with a different musical tradition and cultural memory.

A musical movement worth mentioning here is the so-called “Clube da Esquina,” or “The Corner Club,” which combines characteristics of both *Tropicália* and *marginália*. Originating in 1963 in the city of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, and moving to Rio de Janeiro in 1970, it has often been considered as an “outside” answer to Rio-centered *Tropicália* (De Olivera 17). Márcio Borges, Beto Guedes, Wagner Tiso and Ronaldo Bastos are related to this movement, but the person most closely associated with it is Milton Nascimento, whose song “Milagre dos Peixes” from his eponymous 1973 solo album will be analyzed in Part 3 of this study. The music of Clube da Esquina is similar to that of *Tropicália* in the sense that it can be characterized as experimental, combining multiple music styles that are either rooted in Brazilian traditions or in foreign rock, pop and jazz. Where they differ from *Tropicália* is that their project did not have a well-formulated goal and politics, nor a clear conceptualization of the “how” and “why” of its musical characteristics (De Oliveira 18-21). What links the Clube da Esquina to *marginália* is that their overall discourse is based on a local and urban, personalized micro-narrative, as opposed to *Tropicália*’s tendency of addressing the bigger question of Brazilian national identity. In the specific case of Nascimento’s “Milagre dos Peixes,” what corresponds directly to *marginália* is the way in which the use of language reflects the speaking subject’s search for a relative invisibility, or marginality, in order to circumvent censorship. The section below clarifies the approach I take to analyzing the songs’ sonic resistance and explains how this study is structured.

Approach and Outline

Throughout this study my method is that of cultural analysis. Four elements of this critical practice are of particular relevance to the way in which I analyze

song lyrics and their performance. First, cultural analysis is based on Mieke Bal's contention that cultural objects should not be approached through the restrictive application of methods, as this presupposes a disciplinary straightjacket that disregards the fact that a single object can hold multiple meanings and can trigger a variety of associations if it is approached from a multidisciplinary perspective (2002: 4-5). Instead, Bal proposes a concept-based approach in which concepts are not fixed and passive tools to be applied to an object, but can come to mean and achieve different things as they travel between different disciplinary contexts. In addition, concepts can also be transformed by the analysis they facilitate. In Bal's words, then, concepts are not

firmly established univocal terms but [...] dynamic in themselves. While groping to define, provisionally and partly, what a particular concept may *mean*, we gain insight into what it can *do*. It is in the groping that the valuable work lies. (2002: 11)

The openness to contingency of this concept-based approach is important because it allows an approach of the object on its own terms instead of treating the object as a passive receiver of the concept's application. An analysis should always be a two-way street: "the object should [also] enlighten the concept, establishing [...] an intersubjective movement of dialogic interaction" (Peeren 2005: 3). Accordingly, throughout this study, the main concepts of diaspora, hegemony and testimony are introduced in relation to objects that not simply reaffirm their established definition, but work to extend, relate and sometimes destabilize them. The objects, in this case the analyzed songs, therefore, help to discover new aspects of these concepts that, in turn, deepen the analyses.

The second element of cultural analysis that is relevant to my approach is this active role of the object, which appears as another active subject taking part in the process of analysis by, in Bal's words, being allowed "to speak back" (2002: 45). When the analyst does not merely theorize but also gives the object a voice in the process of the analysis, the object helps to "divert" and "complicate" the analysis (2002: 45). This implies that the analysis is not only about the interaction between concept and object, but also about the interaction between the analyst

and the object as the analysis takes place.

This introduces the third central element of cultural analysis, which is that of close reading. As Jonathan Culler has argued, close reading is difficult to define but has to do with the detailed examination of a text in all its dimensions, which, in music, includes the sonic aspects and the performance, and with “a respect for the stubbornness of texts, which resist easy comprehension or description in terms of expected themes and motifs” (2010: 3). According to Bal, close reading does not indicate that “the text speaks for itself” and that the analysis should therefore remain internal to it, but rather that “no text yields meaning outside of the social world and cultural makeup of the reader. [...] A text does not speak for itself. We surround it, or *frame* it, before we let it speak at all” (2002: 8). The way in which I practice close reading in this study is therefore related to the way in which I frame the analyzed songs’ lyrics, their sonic elements and their performance not only in their historical context, but also within their function as a narrative and within my own field of perceptions. For example, when I introduce *detuning* as a concept that is not only characteristic of music by the Brazilian *margináís* but that can also be understood as a way of subverting the unitary narrative of legitimized discourse, a first prerequisite is that I recognize the disturbing sonic effect produced by multiple, non-harmonious tones. Only by understanding the effect that this had on me can I try to understand the conceptual ways in which it functions in the object. In Culler’s words, cultural analysis is about “recognizing that your analysis is conditioned by your own place in the present, and is thus involved in that which it seeks to analyze” (1999: 342).

Because of this emphasis on the present moment of the analysis, a fourth element of cultural analysis should also be mentioned here. In explaining Bal’s notion of cultural analysis, Peeren describes it as an approach that “seeks to understand the past as *part* of the present (1). According to Peeren, this entails

tak[ing] cultural objects and theories from the past, not excluding the very recent, and examin[ing] their function in the present as part of the contemporary cultural memory of which the cultural analyst partakes. (2005: 1)

Objects from the past acquire meaning in, from and for the present. Thus, my analysis of songs from late 1980s and early 1990s Cuba and 1970s Brazil is not just an effort to understand these historical contexts from the perspective of present. More importantly, the way in which the songs provide new ways of understanding the discussed concepts and analyzed strategies of sonic resistance is considered relevant for understanding the present itself.

To underscore this study's focus on music and its argument that the sonic can be read like a text and text can be read through its sonic manifestation, I have structured it like a musical piece. Thus, instead of being divided into chapters, the body of this work consists of Movements (which also points to the status of my concepts as traveling ones). In musical terminology, "movement" is used to indicate a subdivision of a larger whole (a concerto, a symphony) that, because of its "self-sufficiency in terms of key, tempo and structure," forms a separate unit (*Oxford English Dictionary*). In spite of its potential independence from the rest of the composition, a movement usually plays with some of the musical themes that traverse the composition and ensure its coherence. However, these themes are placed in a variety of sonic perspectives within the different Movements.¹⁷ In a similar fashion, the Movements of this study constitute separate sections that focus on different central concepts but are nonetheless interconnected by the repetition of these concepts, which are looked at from different perspectives. Typically, a song by either a Brazilian or a Cuban *cantautor* is analyzed in one or sometimes two Movements, with each Movement introducing a different concept to the analysis. Sometimes a concluding Movement brings together the songs analyzed in the previous ones. By using this structure, each Movement is seen to stimulate the travel of a concept as it progresses through the different analyses.

Each group of Movements constitutes a Part preceded by an introductory "Pickup Note" and concluding with a "Fermata." The term "pickup note" refers to the note that marks the "anticipatory weak beat, [...] anacrusis or upbeat" before the first heavy downbeat of the new bar (Gauldin 22). Where the new bar constitutes the start of a musical theme in a determined meter, speed and pitch, the pickup note preludes the real start, as if it were a moment of gasping for breath

¹⁷ I am aware of the fact that "perspective" derives from a predominantly visual register. In Movement 8 I will argue for an alternative terminology that places auditive perception at its center by introducing the concept of *strabistic* listening.

before singing the first tone. Translated to this study, the Pickup Note, in which “note” also refers to “commentary” in the textual sense, is the introduction to a group of Movements converging around a central theme. What closes this group of Movements is the Fermata, which draws the Movements together. In music, the fermata is indicated with a  symbol that can mark either a slight moment of rest, holding back the tempo after a melodic phrase, or the moment of pause for the orchestra towards the end of a movement in the composition, when the soloist plays the cadence, improvising on the central theme of the composition (Gauldin 49). The final conclusions of this study are presented in a Coda, indicating a more definite (though still open) final movement marking the end of a musical piece (Gauldin 50).

The study is divided into three Parts, focusing on, respectively, the narrative, auditive and expressive characteristics of the songs that are analyzed and of the bodies through which they are produced. These bodies refer, among others, to the physical presence of the *cantautor* and his or her performance, to the body of an audience whose interaction with a song becomes a performative expression of the lyrics and to the body of the Caribbean island as the diasporic homeland. Each Part consists of the analysis of two songs, one by a Cuban and one by a Brazilian *cantautor*, that are placed in dialogue with each other around a central concept.

In Part 1, the central concept I develop through my analyses is that of *affective diaspora*. Looking at the main perspective of the analyzed songs, the narrators’ voices and the homeland as narrative body, I explore how, in a context of diaspora, both the homeland and the subject as narrative constructions become multidirectional. In my analysis of Cuban *cantautor* Carlos Varela’s song “Árboles raros” (1989) in Movement 1, diaspora is introduced as an affective phenomenon that causes the supposedly closed-off inside world of the homeland to be traversed by different, foreign narratives and thus to become multiple. The capacity of affect to resonate between bodies so that they can mutually impinge on one another is further analyzed in Movement 2 through the song “Aquele abraço” (1969) by Brazilian *cantautor* Gilberto Gil. The idea that affect, as resonance, is capable of working not only in a linear way but also laterally is developed by considering the way the song’s narrative can also be read as a horizontal progression

of music in which its lateral connections function as the vertical connection of simultaneously played notes, which constitutes musical harmony. I refer to this phenomenon as *affective resonance*. Finally, in Movement 3 I situate both songs in the particular contexts of censorship in late 1980s and early 1990s Cuba and 1970s Brazil. Exploring how censorship sets out to establish a strict separation between the inside and the outside of either national territories or legitimized discourses, I suggest that *insularization* and *carnival* function as affectively diasporic narratives in the songs by Varela and Gil, capable of circumventing censorship by displacing the center of its discourse.

v takes on the perspective of the auditive body to reflect on the concept of hegemony. Movement 4 starts with an analysis of the song “Guillermo Tell” (1991) by Carlos Varela in which the Oedipal theme of the son wishing to take the place of his father also comes to signify the dynamics of closeness and distance between the younger generations of Cubans and the Revolutionary authorities. This reading is then expanded to include the auditive characteristics of the recorded live performance of Varela’s song. Through a discussion of the concept of hegemony and of the contingent potential to subvert it from the inside, I explore the audience’s rhythmic distortions of Varela’s song, audible in the recorded performance as possible subversions of a hegemonic system on an auditive level. My subsequent reading of “Let’s play that” (1972) by the Brazilian *cantautor* Jards Macalé in Movement 5 explores the subversive motive of the angel appearing in the lyrics of this song in relation to the figure of the angel as the representation of a multiplicity of worlds in postmodern theory.¹⁸ Exploring how multiplicity can be subversive, I introduce the concept of *detuning* to explain how singing out of tune can subvert a hegemonic system from the inside. I elaborate on this idea by introducing the concept of the *membrane* as a body that is neither manifested in an inside or an outside space, but that detunes the supposedly neat separation between both realms. Because an auditive reading of a detuned discourse cannot be conducted in a linear way, in Movement 6 I suggest a *strabistic* mode of listening that does not censor the detuned discourse but, in being strabistic (cross-eyed), aligns with its inherent multiplicity.

18 The reason why the title of the song is not completely capitalized is because it is not a translation. The original Portuguese title is in English. In the Portuguese and Spanish notation of titles only the first word is capitalized.

The concluding Part 3 focuses on the expressive qualities of bodies and uses the concept of testimony to understand how a censored song may nevertheless give an account of being censored. In Movement 7 I focus on Cuban rapper Telmary Diaz's 2005 song "Los Revolucionarios," exploring the textual and performative ways in which the word "revolution" is presented as a fragmented concept that can even come to signify inertia.¹⁹ By introducing the concept of enunciation in relation to the song, I argue that the speaking subject, in a similarly fragmented way, can come to speak from a position external to itself, metadiscursively vocalizing an alienation from itself. My analysis of the Brazilian singer Milton Nascimento's 1973 song "Milagre dos peixes" in Movement 8 explores non-language as testimony's way of voicing the silence imposed on it by censorship, drawing mainly on Giorgio Agamben's concept of testimony. In Movement 9 I dig deeper into the mechanisms of censorship in Cuba and Brazil, and ask, in relation to Jacques Derrida's argument about the inherent impossibility for testimony to give a full account of the event, whether it is not precisely this quality that enables it to express what censorship does not allow. Bringing Nascimento's and Telmary's songs together, I conclude by suggesting the concept of the *carrier-voice* as proposing a voice that is able to testify where normal speech does not. Representing a multiplicity of speaking subjects, this voice is only expressive in its bodily, sonic qualities that are performative and affective. Returning to the central question of this study, I argue that it is this sonic form of expression that, because it does not follow censorship's rules and therefore does not articulate an opposition from the outside, destabilizes and thus resists the boundaries that define censorship's inside space.

19 The decision to include a song from a more recent period of Cuban history is motivated by the fact that also in this period of time the main concerns addressed by the Cuban artists in the previous analyses still apply to this period.