BRAZIL'S NEW RACIAL POLITICS

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Black NGOs and "Conscious" Rap: New Agents of the Antiracism Struggle in Brazil

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There are various types of black social movements and also various types of struggles against racism in Brazilian society (Santos 2007). Thus, I will define classic black social movements as black social movements from before the 1990s, to distinguish them from new forms of black movements that emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, such as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with a racial focus, the artists of "conscious" rap, black parliamentarians, and the militancy of black intellectuals in universities, which are some of the forms of struggle against racism and Brazilian racial inequality.

This chapter thus includes a brief discussion of two new social agents in the antiracism struggle: (1) black NGOs, which are mostly led by women; and (2) the artists of conscious rap. These emergent antiracist institutions and agents, NGOs and rappers,[1] derive directly and indirectly from the black social movement (Santos 2007). These new social agents, like the current and former black parliamentarians,[2] have participated in the antiracism struggle by extending the struggle for racial equality in Brazil. In this way, they help to create the necessary conditions for debates and the implementation of specific public policies for blacks to be integrated into Brazilian society as common citizens, and not as second-class citizens. This chapter focuses on black NGOs and rappers of conscious rap as agents of new forms of black activism.

New Forms of Struggle Against Racism: Black NGOs

Even if there has been a slowing down of traditional black social movements during the last decade of the twentieth century, as suggested by the American historian George Andrews (1998), caused, in part, by declining wages and the implementation of neoliberal policies in the country (Santos and Silva 2006),

this slowdown should not be interpreted as a retreat or a weakening of the Afro-Brazilian struggle.[3] Black social movements have not been able to conquer, on a broad scale, Afro-Brazilians of different class backgrounds with a discourse that focused on the shared experience of racial discrimination and on the struggle to achieve racial equality, nor have they been able to recruit new members for the struggle, amplify the number of militant black organizations, or even strengthen the older and traditional organizations, such as the Unified Black Movement (MNU) (which would probably have given black protest a new impulse and made them—organizations and blacks—more effective). Nevertheless, black social movements have become more professional, for example, in creating black NGOs, and they have massively broadened the reach of their discourse through conscious rap. A significant part of black militancy started expressing itself through NGOs, such as the Institute of Black Women (Geledés), the Center for the Articulation of Marginalized Populations (CEAP), the Center of Studies of Work Relations and Inequality (CEERT), Fala Preta! (an organization of black women), and Criola, among others.

To some extent, black militants became more professional in terms of their qualifications and actions, but they were no less radical than in the previous decades. In other words, there was a process of *NGO-ization* of black social movements that took shape more clearly during the end of the 1980s, as has been the case with Geledés, which was created in 1988 (Roland 2000).

One of the main points of importance in this transformative process of NGO-ization of black social movements is that it redirected the way that the antiracism struggle was expressed. NGOs were able to pay, and thus maintain, black militants, which allowed for the exclusive dedication of black activists to the cause. For example, in a traditional or classic black organization, like the MNU or the Grucon, black activists, because they were guided by an ethic of antiracism struggle, practically paid to be involved in activism. In general, they used their own resources, and oftentimes tapped into already meager family incomes, to carry out actions that in most cases involved costs. Furthermore, they could only become involved in militancy or execute antiracist activities in their spare time by going to meetings on weekends or after work.

Hence, with the emergence of black NGOs, activists started to receive remuneration or salaries to combat racism in Brazilian society. Antiracism activists continue to be guided by an ethic of conviction against racism, but activism against racism became their daily work, and they received payment for it. This made for a more intense and active antiracist struggle. Activists no longer needed to worry about employment. In traditional black antiracism activism, activists that were integrally dedicated to the struggle ran the risk of losing their day jobs. The risk was real, not only because black activists sometimes had to leave their jobs without previous warning, but also because they could suffer retaliation for this type of activism. Thus, activists generally tried to participate in activities that were compatible with their work schedule. This was not always possible, since some antiracist activities took place during work hours. This is especially true for those days that the black movement tried to transform into black history commemorative holidays. For this reason, there was always the risk of losing one's job.

By participating in black NGOs, black activists freed themselves of this risk. Beyond that, they were also able to expose and denounce racism in all spheres of public life, since they did not run the risk of losing their job by way of reprisal for exposing a matter that is taboo in Brazilian society. In this way, they stimulated the antiracism struggle by increasing the black protest against racism.

It is clear that the increase of black protest in Brazilian society is not exclusively due to a sprouting of black NGOs. There are several factors that led to this development. But we cannot deny the importance of black NGOs in the last three marches against racism that occurred in the country's capital, the city of Brasília. These occurred on November 20, 1995; November 16, 2005; and November 22, 2005. Black NGOs, classic black social movements, and other organizations of Brazilian civil society were fundamental to the articulation, organization, and achievement of these marches. Therefore, it was not by chance that the activist Edna Roland, founder and activist of the NGO Fala Preta!, an organization of black women, was chosen to serve as a spokesperson at the Third World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Religious Intolerance, carried out between August 30 and September 7, 2001, in Durban, South Africa. As a representative from an NGO dedicated to Afro-Brazilian women's issues, Roland's participation exemplifies the influence and ability of black NGOs in the struggle for racial equality.

From the second half of the 1990s, black NGOs organized and coordinated by some black activists and former activists of traditional black social movements began a dialogue between black social movements and several organizations of Brazilian civil society, as well as with international civil organizations. In this way they extended their power and influence to several organizations of civil society: for example, union offices, union workers, political parties (mostly leftist parties), and the Brazilian state; the same state that, since the year 1995, has officially recognized that Brazil is a racist country (Sales Santos 2006). Nevertheless, this recognition is not solely due to pressures from black NGOs. The state's admission is due to long years of struggle and internal pressures from traditional black social movements as well as external international pressures (Sales Santos 2006). This does not imply a denial that black NGOs also had an important role in such pressure. Sociologist Edward Telles (2003: 73) states,

> At the end of the 1990s, several NGOs of the black movement with dimension, resources, and professional capacity were created in several Brazilian states. The organization of black movements in NGOs was mirrored in the

> change of social movements in general, and those organizations would become more and more institutionally represented.

Thus, black NGOs are a demonstration that classic black social movements, intentionally or not, had also become instruments of the construction of new social agents and new forms of struggle against racism that do not necessarily have the same structure, perspective on politics, vision of the world, and forms of performance of the original movements. In this manner, new forms of expression of antiracism militancy evolved and were in favor of the promotion of racial equality. In this way, the traditional Afro-Brazilian struggle by older black social movements against racism produced other agents of activism (Santos 2007), which began to emerge mainly in the late twentieth century. Traditional black movements started to perceive and recognize new agents and forms of struggle as important to strengthen older black organizations. According to the document *March Against Racism for Citizenship and Life,* produced on November 20, 1995, by Brazilian black movements:

> The racial thematic, particularly in the 300th year of Zumbi, is distinguished in a vigorous form in the Brazilian space of public discussion. This is the result of a rise without precedent, in our history of the struggle against racism. This victory resulted because of a strengthening of Black Movement organizations as much as an increase and internalization of its entities. New forms of articulation of militancy in work, unions, popular movements, political parties, universities, parliament, religious entities, governmental bodies, etc. in recent years, increased better ways of combating racism. The emergence of Black Women movements with their own expression and national character . . . doubly fight against racial and gender oppression. (ENMZ 1996: 9)

The fact is that classic black social movements, even with their retraction, as Andrews notes (1991a), directly and indirectly disseminated a critical consciousness of Brazilian race relations and inequalities between blacks and whites. And this not only occurred on the part of Afro-Brazilians who have ascended socially, since they felt and still feel the weight of racial discrimination even more so than Afro-Brazilians who have remained in their traditional social places (Andrews 1998; Moura 1994; Hasenbalg 1979), but also among workers, unemployed people, students, youth, and musicians, among other social groups that live mainly in major Brazilian metropolises, especially those in the suburbs.

In other words, just as racism is dynamic and renews and reorganizes itself in accordance with the evolution of the society and changing historical circumstances (Munanga 1994: 178), the struggle against racism is also not static. New subjects and social agents start to struggle against racism, and new forms of black resistance emerge, helping to spread the message of antiracism and racial equality. The MNU, for example, appeared at the end of the 1970s to unify the antiracism struggle of some regional and local black entities. Nevertheless,

when the MNU defined what it meant to be a black movement, at the beginning of the 1990s, after approximately thirteen years of growth, this entity began to recognize that several other social forms of organizations, languages, action policies, and antiracism agents had blossomed. An example is the group of black intellectuals and researchers, among other groups that struggle for racial equality, who resist racial discrimination or fight against racism in Brazil, and present important antiracist proposals for the democratization of race relations and Brazilian society. Then, the MNU started to define the black movement as ample and plural actions with a wider scope. The MNU acknowledged that a multiplicity of groups and black organizations were involved in the struggle to combat racism. The MNU stated:

> We understand the black movement as a set of initiatives of resistance and cultural production and explicit political action to combat racism, which manifests itself at different levels, in different languages, by means of a multiplicity of organizations spread throughout the country. The 1980s introduced new risks and components to the perspective of the militant vanguard that had emerged in the last decade, which allowed for a new envisioning of how to organize a black movement. The majority of black groups and organizations grew at the margins of the then dominant repertoires and projects characterizing the end of the 1970s and considered most advanced. Adopting guerilla characteristics, the antiracism struggle spread like wildfire among certain sectors of the black population. Musicians, actors, artists, samba schools, cultural groups, study centers, political organizations, predominantly black recreational clubs, partisan groups, black intellectuals and researchers, Candomblé houses [cult houses for the practice of Afro-Brazilian religion], afoxé groups [African religion–inspired cultural activism groups], religious groups, black writers, black youth groups, unions, black women groups, advising agencies to popular movements, the black press, black political parties, black parliamentarians, and others have followed the call uttered from the stairs of the Municipal Theater in São Paulo, on July 7, 1978.[4] (Cardoso 2002: 212–213)

All Afro-Brazilians were not involved in traditional black social movements, yet some still wanted to express their indignation about racism and racial inequality. Individuals that for various reasons did not have the chance to be black activists in entities of black social movements searched for some form of expressing their indignation and fighting against racism and racial inequality in Brazil. An example of this is provided in an interview with a former director of the Brazilian Association of Black Researchers (ABPN), conducted by Santos (2007). The respondent stated:

> My religious background, as an Evangelical Christian, created its own reality, which did not include participating in black movements, become a militant in the proper sense of the word. This does not mean that my black family did not question racism inside our church, for example, and in Brazilian society in general. We were not unaware of these issues, and we stood up against racism in a way that it was compatible with Christian doctrine. We

> paid attention to all activities of the black movement: the struggle for our own aesthetic that should be respected (wearing our hair natural and not straightening it, wearing clothes in bright colors and not only beige or blue, etc.); the struggle of blacks in the United States; the MNU, etc. We knew about all of this and we followed everything. At the university I tried to be involved in the movement, but it was not easy, because of my language and way of being, including my clothes and hairstyle, even though they were not Pentecostal. They were still considered white. All of this complicated my participation in groups like the MNU. It was not easy for those who follow a certain type of behavior, aesthetic, and religion to participate in the MNU. I am talking about the end of the 1980s, mainly at the beginning of the 1990s. As it was so difficult to join the already existing groups, I ended up participating in the creation of a new group that lasted about two years. The name of the group was "Black Consciousness" and we met every Saturday afternoon to read and study . . . in the center of the city, Recife. It was very good. This was in 1992 or 1993. . . . Many people were activists, without necessarily being part of the organized black movement. . . . There is a lot of protest against racism by blacks outside of traditional black organizations. (female respondent "A" from the ABPN in Santos 2007)

This lengthy quotation gives important insight into the fact that racial struggles against discrimination go beyond black organizations. For this reason, I use the expression black social movements, in the plural, rather than the singular term, the black movement. As we can see in the previous quotation, the respondent formed a group that was concerned with racial issues and, although she was not involved in a classic black-movement organization, she should be considered a participant in Brazil's black movements. As a former director of the ABPN, she has led an organization made up of Afro-Brazilian intelligentsia, which is another form of activism, given the low number of Afro-Brazilian academics. Further, she is oriented to the black movement because of her exposure to its discourse and the group she formed that focused on Afro-Brazilian issues. Because of the multiplicity of groups and black organizations, like black NGOs, there also appeared a collective and individual multiplicity of actions against racism in some areas of Brazilian society. All of these black actions, antiracism organizations, and groups in favor of racial equality characterized and extended the debate about the racial question, making it possible to include it in the Brazilian political agenda.

Rap and Rappers: New Agents of Antiracism Discourse

Another change that was important in terms of black mobilization against racism in Brazil in the 1990s was the reutilization of music, in the form of rapping, as a way to denounce and condemn Brazilian racial oppression. Although the outcry of black organizations, such as the MNU, for true racial equality had not effectively sensitized the broader Brazilian public sphere to the necessity to include the racial question in the national agenda (Santos 2007), Afro-Brazilians, who until then did not directly participate in the struggle against racism, started to sympathize with the antiracism agenda of those traditional black social movements.

Hence, young Afro-Brazilians living in the peripheries of major urban centers, especially of São Paulo, Brasília, Belo Horizonte, and Goiânia (Amorim 1997), started to sing and tell the stories of racial and social violence to which they were exposed, through reflexive and extremely critical music, thus transforming their life stories into verse by utilizing an extraordinarily fitting poetry, namely rap.

Through involvement in NGOs, hip-hop artists give exposure to their music and message and gain a role in public space as they are formally institutionalized as an organization. Further, Pardue (2005) finds that Afro-Brazilian youth who participate in hip-hop activities embrace the notion that black marginality is not simply the result of class, but of race and class. Reiter and Mitchell (2008) find that Afro-Brazilian listeners of hip-hop support the notion of black racial group identity more than those who do not listen to it. They attribute this to the consciousness-raising efforts of hip-hop artists. Pardue's (2005, 2007) and Reiter and Mitchell's (2008) findings thus provide further support for my argument, namely that rap artists function as new agents of the antiracism struggle.

Traditional black social movements had not won many allies in the fight against racism before the 1990s. Traditional channels of pleading to state actors of the Brazilian public sphere such as political parties, labor unions, and entrepreneurs, among others, who refused to include the racial question on the national agenda, were not viable solutions to addressing racism and racial inequality. The most oppressed people who suffered from racial discrimination vocally disagreed with the state's silence toward racial issues and expressed their dissatisfaction through rap music. This is a new form of black struggle. Thus, they started to use rap as a vehicle of communication to denounce racial and class discrimination in Brazil.[5] One of the most well-known groups that explicitly addressed these issues is Racionais MCs. In the introduction of the record *Raio X do Brasil* (*X-Ray of Brazil*), Racionais affirmed that the liberty of speech, by means of music, was one of the few rights that black youth still had in Brazil.

X-Ray of Brazil, for Racionais, is a strong denunciation of oppression against the most vulnerable social groups of the country: poor people at the peripheries of major urban centers who are mainly Afro-Brazilian or black. At first sight, Racionais and many groups of conscious rap present a discourse that explains the need of the *manos* (brothers) to refuse all the daily violence that the *system* imposes on the periphery. In a way, it is also a moral discourse that condemns the use of drugs (including alcohol) and idleness, among other destructive behaviors on the periphery. As rappers themselves

affirm, they seek to have "a positive message" for the *manos*. Nevertheless, there is also a constant discourse of race and class that establishes a recurrent opposition between the world of blacks and whites (Fernandes 1972), rich and poor, and the periphery and the center. If at first sight the lyrics express a message of peace, or as anthropologist Amorim (1997: 106) affirms, the rap groups "sing of unity and peace in their rhyme," we cannot forget that this message is internally pacifist for the periphery itself; but it is simultaneously aggressive and in opposition to the system.

These rap lyrics verbalize an extremely racialized discourse that expresses the racial discrimination blacks are subjected to on a daily basis. In the song "Hey Boy," Racionias claims that those in power, namely whites, believe that blacks belong in prison. Further, they believe that poor people are forced to steal, and that it is not a choice, because they do not have enough money for basic human needs. Violence is another theme addressed in these songs.[6] In "Fim de Semana no Parque" (Weekend in the Park), black children are not afforded the simple luxuries such as Christmas gifts. Rather, they live in poor communities rampant with violence. Racionais develops and disseminates a consciousness about discrimination and racial inequalities that affects those in the periphery. They succeed in being more expressive and expansive than traditional black social movements. The racialized discourse of rap is a weapon that simultaneously shoots against and challenges the myth of Brazilian racial democracy[7] as well as the silence about racial issues in the country. More than this, it is a weapon from the periphery that is aimed at the center of the system. As KlJay and Mano Brown, who belong to Racionais, affirm, "We are the most dangerous blacks of the country, and we will change a lot of things here. There was a little time ago that we had no consciousness of this." Also, "I am not an artist. Artists make art; I make weapons. I am a terrorist" (KlJay and Mano Brown, respectively, *apud* Showbizz 1998). They both take on active roles as participants in black struggle as consciousness-raising agents to poor Afro-Brazilian youth.

The change affirmed above by KlJay is the active voice, which, in fact, is the title of one of their songs ("Voz Ativa"), of rappers against racism and Brazilian racial inequalities. Furthermore, it is the breaking of the white monopoly on the representation of blacks in Brazil (Bairros 1996: 183). K1Jay, Mano Brown, and other rappers challenge this with their interpretation of the racial circumstances of blacks. This is similar to what intellectual blacks are trying to achieve in academia by means of production of active knowledge-thought (Santos 2007). There is a search for the decolonization of scientific knowledge, intellectual autonomy, the proposal of policies that promote racial equality, and the rupture of monopoly or control of studies and research on blacks from the point of view of intellectuals from the white world, as expressed by Florestan Fernandes (1972). It is something so "violently pacific" that "it sabotages reasoning" and

"shakes the central nervous system" of production of Euro-centric Brazilian academic knowledge. Black self-understanding of their identities and social situations is expressed in the lyrics of music of rap groups. Examples include the songs "Voz Ativa" and "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3" (Chapter 4, Verse 3), both from the Racionais MCs. In the introduction to the song "Capítulo 4, Versículo 3," they say, "60 percent of youth in the periphery without criminal activities have already suffered police violence, three out of four people killed by police are black, in Brazilian universities only 2 percent of students are black and every four hours a black youth dies violently in São Paulo." And in the song "Voz Ativa," they say that although black people are not equal to everyone, black youth now have an active voice and they need to reconstruct their pride.

The *terror* expressed above in Mano Brown's discourse aims at the nonresignation of blacks. Further, it aims at the denial of blacks that whites wanted to create and to instill in them. This terror also corresponds to the perception that poverty has a color, and that among poor people of the periphery color and race make a difference. The discourse is similar or equal to that of classic black social movements (Santos 2007), whose objective is to eliminate the ideology of racial democracy and deconstruct academic discourse, which influences a significant portion of Brazilian intellectuals who believe that different treatment between whites and blacks is due to only social class and not race. As affirmed in Racionais's song "Racista Otário" (Racist Fool): "Sociologists prefer to be impartial and say our dilemma is financial. But if you analyze well, you discover that blacks and whites seem to be but are not equal." At last, the discourse of terror helps to confront the representation of black people by whites about black people, in daily life or in the academic world. This terror, in reality, confers self-determination to blacks.

This is the vision of only one specific group of conscious rap. But it is a vision of the world not only for this group, but a vision that became a national reference for the *manos,* who are linked to rap, and for other groups who are profoundly influenced by Racionais. This vision of the world is being widely disseminated among rappers themselves, social groups that live in the peripheries of major urban centers of the country, and some sectors of the Brazilian middle class. For example, in June 1998, Racionais sold more than 250,000 copies of its third CD, *X-Ray of Brazil,* and more than 500,000 of its fourth CD, *Surviving Hell,* without the assistance of the open or large television media and without being on major national or transnational record labels.[8]

On the other hand, not all rap groups with national prestige agree completely with Racionais's ideological position. For the GOG, a group from Brasília, the racial question is not the central subject in its *Chronicles of the Periphery,* which has as a central focus the denunciation of social oppression faced by vulnerable social groups of the periphery, and poor people in general. Nevertheless, Gog, the leader of the group, acknowledges that it is "logical

that blacks in Brazil have more problems." Nevertheless, he affirms that in the periphery "a bullet in the head is to blacks as it is to whites" (Gog in *Caros Amigos,* 1998: 21).

Nevertheless, even among prestigious rap groups that differ ideologically from Racionais's position and the racialist discourse in lyrics, the discourse of race and class is inevitable and consequently recurring in other groups' rhymes. An example is GOG's song "Brasil com 'P'" (Brazil with P), which also has a racialized notion of who the poor people are and who is targeted by police officers.

Brazil with "P"
Published research shows
A preference for Blacks, the poor, and prostitutes to be arrested
Stop and Think why!
I continue,
In the peripheries they practice perversities,
PMs (Military Policemen).
Standing at their stages, politicians make promises, they promise . . .
Nothing but lies
Only to their own advantage.
Beaches, programs, swimming pools, palms.
For the periphery: panic, gunpowder, pá, pá, pá. . . .
Without penalty, life imprisonment
Words spoken by the brother poet.[9]

Even if the construction of racial identity is not emphasized as strongly by the rap produced in Brasília as it is by that produced in São Paulo (Amorim 1997), this motive is also very present in the repertoire of rappers from Brasília, as can be observed, for example, in the lyrics of "Sub-Raça" (Sub-Race), by now-extinct Brasília group Câmbio Negro. In it there is a strong emphasis on color.

Sub-Race
Now brothers I will tell the truth
The cruelties they do to us
Only because our skin has a different color
We are constantly pestered by cruel racism,
Much worse than drinking from the bitter cup is having to constantly swallow
Just because you are black—that's a fact.
We cannot learn the value of our own color,
In schools or colleges
Being black never was a defect,

It will always be a privilege
It's a privilege to belong to the race
that with their own blood constructed Brazil. . . .[10]

In cities such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, hip-hop and rap artists generally work with NGOs, which attract Afro-Brazilian youth. These collaborative efforts and the influence of racially oriented NGOs may be one reason the discourse of marginalization differs in various Brazilian cities. It is also likely that specific historical, political, and economic characteristics influence whether marginalization is perceived as a result of class or race. The racial identity is emphasized in some places while not emphasized in others, as Amorim demonstrates above (1997).

As we can see, the Afro-Brazilian struggle against racism by means of rap concentrates basically on denouncing racism against blacks and on the denial of racial democracy. Groups that are not organic black-movement organizations participate in their struggle. These groups are new forms of antiracist mobilization but are not structured like classic black organizations, nor do they have the same forms of action as those organizations or black NGOs. They use rap music to denounce racism against Afro-Brazilians. It is a diffuse form of struggle that does not need a group of antiracism activists formally organized by means of institutions or weekly and monthly meetings, aiming to argue and deliberate on the racial question or to establish relationships with the Brazilian state to fight against racism in the country. They do not need organic leaders who are seen and recognized as leaders and political representatives of Afro-Brazilians.

Conclusion

Considering the forms of postabolition, Afro-Brazilian struggle, we can see that they are more expansive than in the past. We can talk about Afro-Brazilian struggles in the plural. All of them have and fulfill a definitive role. None are less important than the others in the fight against racism. More than this, all forms of struggle against racism by means of traditional black social movements, black parliamentarians, black intellectuals, black NGOs, and rappers of conscious rap, as we see in this chapter, contribute to denying the discourse of Brazilian white elites that there is a racial democracy in Brazil, and attempt "to break the white monopoly about the representation of blacks in Brazil" (Bairros 1996: 183) that historically put the black struggle against racism on the margin of public space.

Black NGOs redirected how to be involved in antiracism activism when they made possible the exclusive devotion of black activists to combating racism. With the sprouting of black NGOs, activists started to receive wages

to fight racism in Brazilian society. While it continued to be driven by an ethic of antiracism struggle, this militancy started to be daily work with remuneration. This made possible a more intense and active stance in the fight against racism. Activism in black NGOs gave black activists the opportunity to expose racism in every sphere where they found it operating or manifesting, because they did not run the risk of losing their jobs or suffering other types of retaliation. In this manner, they were able to increase the black protest against racism in Brazil.

On the other hand, and opposite of more traditional black social movements that had always tried to conquer a place in public space, the musicians of conscious rap do not have the same intentions. They are on the edge and speak from the margins (or the periphery) against the center of the system. It seems as though this is a new form of Afro-Brazilian struggle in terms of discourse, which does not seek the negotiation of the racial question in the public sphere. They want the end of racial oppression by the center of power, which by means of racism and other types of violence has pushed people to the edge. Consequently, they preach internal union among members of the periphery and aggression aimed at the power centralized in the system as a form of self-defense. The musicians of conscious rap contribute in a particular way to fighting against racism, even though it is not comparable to the forms of struggle described by Santos (2007).

The new social agents of antiracism, such as the black legislators connected to the antiracism agenda, antiracism NGOs, black intellectuals, and conscious rappers, among others, not only put the racial issue on the Brazilian political agenda, but they also anchored the historical quest for formal and substantive equality for the Brazilian black population firmly into that agenda.

Notes

1. We should not forget that, beyond these new antiracist social agents in the antiracist struggle that I describe and analyze in this chapter, there are also some black parliamentarians engaged in the struggle, as well as some black intellectuals, as demonstrated by Santos (2007).

2. For example, Abdias do Nascimento, Benedita da Silva, Paulo Paim, and Luiz Alberto, who were all involved in antiracism struggles of black movements in the Brazilian parliament.

3. Actually, this affirmation of Andrews (1991) about the reflection of black social movements needs to be verified by means of more research that should be more complex and sophisticated. There is at least one informational source that indicates an increase of black social movements after the 1980s. The research of Caetana Damasceno et al. conducted in 1986 and 1987 and published in the *Catalog of Black Movement Organizations in Brazil* (1988) demonstrated that there were 573 black organizations in Brazil. Professor Hélio Santos affirmed that "the data bank by the Nucleus of Interdisciplinary Studies of Brazilian Blacks (NEINB-USP) found more than 1,300 black-movement organizations with some type of cultural, religious, and political aspect. Organizations, when they do not directly address racial inequalities, operate as cultural resistance or indirectly work together with struggle" (Hélio Santos 2000: 70).

4. "MNU. I ENEN—A Step Ahead?" *Journal do Movimento Negro Unificado,* no. 18, January–March 1991.

5. Analyzing the lyrics of Brazilian rappers, or better, those that produce conscious rap, we can perceive a discourse of race and class. Conscious rap, according to anthropologist Lara Dos Santos Amorim, "is about rap when it was differentiated from funk, which is more devoted to the contents of its lyrics that seek to denounce social exclusion and the racism" (Amorim 1997: 108). In this chapter, I emphasize the racial discourse. This does not imply a denial of class discourse, but I prioritize the strong racialist discourses of conscious rap, in the face of the racism practiced against the blacks. I do not intend to fully analyze rap lyrics. I make a few commentaries about the lyrics with the intention of letting them speak for themselves. I do not want to put words in the rap artist's mouth. Nevertheless, according to Pinho (2001), "this does not mean there is no interpretative responsibility, but leaves this ultimately to the main authority."

6. In an earlier version of this chapter, I had cited six songs from the Racionais MCs group. Unfortunately I had to remove them from the current version, because I did not obtain the authorization of this group of rap musicians to publish them in my text.

7. Following the sociologist Carlos Hasenbalg, "the notion of the myth to qualify the 'racial democracy' is here used in the sense of illusion or a mistake and to intend to show the distance between representation and reality, the existence of prejudice, discrimination and racial inequalities and their denial in discursive plans" (Hasenbalg 1996: 237). The notion that I endorse and that is utilized in this chapter is a synonym of the ideology of Brazilian racial democracy.

8. *Caros Amigos,* no. 3, September 1998. It is worth noting here not all Afro-Brazilians were involved in traditional black social movements, yet some still wanted to express their indignation about racism and racial inequality. For Racionais MCs, the televised media is a great force that sustains the system that discriminates and oppresses blacks and poor people. This is the central power. According to the magazine *Showbizz* (1998: 29), "Television doesn't think." Moments before the collective interview in December 1997, "they [some members of Racionais] kindly asked reporters of Globo and of SBT to be removed." Globo TV is the main open network of Brazil until the present date and TV SBT was the second most important.

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