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**Title:** "My poetry has no boundaries': dialogues between Sao Paulo's hip hop and the Brazilian musical and poetic tradition

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**Abstract:** This proposal intends to discuss some of the recent changes in hip hop culture in Sao Paulo city (Brazil), and it is related to an ongoing research developed by the authors since 2012. It focuses on rap singers' performances and on their legitimation strategies of such music genre towards broader sectors of Brazilian society. These processes of legitimacy do not seem to be based on reaching a massive audience. Otherwise, they are built upon the aesthetic and lyric valorization of rap music, combining multiple aspects.

The first of them is the intense dialogue with the musical tradition represented by consecrated national genres like Samba and MPB (Brazilian Popular Music), which is clear in artists such as Criolo, Emicida and Rappin Hood, amongst others. These rappers have had the chance of recording with some well-known Brazilian composers, such as Caetano Veloso, Tom Ze and Milton Nascimento.

Secondly, the aesthetic and artistic valorization of rap music occupies the literary realm as a strong poetic movement in the peripheral areas of the city. Such movement is materialized in dozens of monthly organized literary soirées or "poetry slams" inspired by hip hop culture. These events are able to combine the national literary tradition (especially the one developed after the 1922 modernist manifesto) and the production of artists from peripheral areas of the city (associated with new forms in Brazilian literature allowing poetry to resurface).

The third aspect of the analysis points out to the creation of projects, as for example the Project Rinha de MCs, in which beginner MCs challenge each other by making improvised verses and rhymes. The rap battles happen in public places, and the participants try to get the live audience's attention by "breaking down" their opponents. Those events are itinerant and they have opened an important space for the renewal of rap music in São Paulo as they enable the emergence of new artists. Besides that, they have contributed for the strengthening of a more politically engaged and critical rap trend gathering new artists and those already established in this music genre.

By debating these three aspects, the authors argue that some contemporary artists represent the intersection of ethnical and peripheral identities, and the nationalist tradition led by political left-wing intellectuals prevailing in Brazilian Popular Music after the 1960s and 1970s. These processes of cultural hybridization challenge the legitimated forms of artistic production by leading them into a field of impure genres. Therefore, they blur the boundaries between the erudite and the popular, high and low cultures, massive and media productions. A tradition of dialogue, absorption and anthropophagic resignifying of references coming from the most different backgrounds is an essential feature of Brazilian music and culture in general.