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***Coloniality in the institutionalization of Brazilian art music in the 19th century***

In this paper we will discuss some characteristics of art music institutionalization in Brazil at the end of the nineteenth century. The study about the music autonomy process allows an approach on the elites’ action in the establishment of an aesthetic paradigm which represented their ideals of an adequate music to the nation. There was in Brazil an art music circulation system that included musical education, tours of Italian opera companies and international musicians, performance of the canonical European repertoire as well as of some Brazilian composers, music criticism, dilettantes’ private clubs for chamber music practice and a few of specific places where art music was performed. Most musical institutions functioned precariously, and the process of musical autonomy never fully occurred. In Brazil, there was no rise of an industrial or commercial bourgeoisie linked to urbanization, and Romanticism was characterized by a neocolonial dynamic, in which the aristocratic (and white) elites, composed of large landowners, whose wealth was based on the exploitation of slave labour, kept the European centres as cultural models, and used the art music for social distinction based on class and ‘race’ within a highly stratified society. Despite the abolition of the slavery system in 1888 and the establishment of the republican regime in 1889, the racial theories continued to guide the Brazilian social thought founded on the positivism, the social evolutionism and the environmental determinism. This thought remained present in the elites’ mentalities, who denied any aesthetic value to the cultural products of the popular classes, rejecting mainly the African heritage in the Brazilian culture. The institutionalization of art music and the devaluation of all others musical practices reiterated the racism in the Brazilian culture and kept the compositional languages linked which European models, especially Wagnerianism (still seen as the music of the future), so that republican art music at the end of the nineteenth century did not have the expression of nationalism as a main goal, which would occur only from 1920.

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