

“Brazil, Show Your Face!”: AIDS, Homosexuality, and Art in Post-Dictatorship Brazil¹

By

Caroline C. Landau

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
In the Department of History at Brown University
Thesis Advisor: James N. Green

April 14, 2009

¹ Cazuza, “Brasil,” *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988. My translation

Acknowledgements

Writing this thesis would not have been possible without the help, guidance, and support of many people. While in Brazil, I had the tremendous pleasure of getting to know the archivists at *Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS* (ABIA) in Rio de Janeiro, particularly Aline Lopes and Heloísa Souto, without whose help, patience, enthusiasm, goodwill, suggestions, and encyclopedic knowledge of AIDS in Brazil this thesis would never have come to fruition. Thank you also to Veriano Terto, Jr. from ABIA for agreeing to speak with me about AIDS grassroots organization in an interview in the fall of 2007. I am grateful to Dr. Vânia Mercer, who served as a sounding board for many of my questions and a font of sources on AIDS in Brazil in the early 1990s and presently. Thank you to Patricia Figueroa, who taught me the ins-and-outs of the Brown University library system early on in the research of this thesis. Thank you also to the Brown University Department of History for the stipend granted to thesis writers.

Part of my research is owed to serendipity and luck. I count as one of my blessings the opportunity to have met Jacqueline Cantore, a longtime friend of Caio Fernando Abreu's and former MTV executive in Brazil. I owe to Jacqueline a richer understanding of the climate of the 1980s and 1990s in Brazil. Her time and willingness to share her memories with me have been invaluable.

I am indebted to Jennifer Lambe, a graduate student of Latin American history, for her indispensable comments and edits on my draft. Her attention to detail, knowledge of the subject area, and keen insights have helped me to craft a more cohesive narrative.

Professor Nancy Jacobs, the current director of the thesis writing program, has been a constant source of support in the process of researching and writing my thesis, both in terms of

discussing technicalities, such as citations and note-taking, and with regards to her general enthusiasm and guidance. Her wish to develop thesis writers into critical thinkers and careful historians has exposed to me the nuances and intricacies of telling histories, and for this I am especially grateful.

Thank you to my family and friends, who throughout the research and writing process opened up my thoughts and questions to discussion, offered their feedback, and encouraged me. Very special thanks go to my uncle David Zugman, a Brazilian music aficionado who supplied me with some very valuable opinions about *Tropicália* and the political climate that produced it. Thank you to Dad and Brian for their constant encouragement, Jon for his patience, and most of all, thank you to my Mom, who tirelessly edited draft after draft of this thesis, helped me decipher even the most indecipherable Brazilian texts, and passed on to me my passion for Brazil. Eu te amo, mamãe.

Finally, Professor James N. Green has been my most ardent supporter since my first year at Brown. Professor Green was not only the first to introduce me to Brazilian history, but also fostered in me the desire to think and dream big. His zest for Brazil, rigorous scholarship, and dedication to undergraduate students will remain with me forever as powerful lessons; without his constant enthusiasm, careful planning and editing, and belief in my project, this thesis never would have come to be. Beyond this, Professor Green has been a mentor in every aspect of my academic life, devoting countless hours to developing projects and advising me. For all of this, I am forever grateful.

This thesis is for Cazuzza, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu,
without whom our lives would be all the poorer.

This thesis is for Mom, Dad, Brian, and Jon,
without whom I could not have told these stories.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	6
Chapter One: Brazil: Democracy, Authoritarianism, and Back.....	19
Chapter Two: The Making of a Brazilian Epidemic.....	42
Chapter Three: Cazuzza: Iconoclastic Youth, Transcendental Death.....	63
Chapter Four: Renato Russo: Contradictions in Music and Life.....	93
Chapter Five: Caio Fernando Abreu: Exploring AIDS in the Gay Metropolis.....	120
Conclusion.....	142
Works Cited.....	147

“Brazil, Show Your Face!”: AIDS, Homosexuality, and Art in Post-Dictatorship Brazil²

Introduction

In an interview printed on July 1, 1992 in Rio de Janeiro’s leading newspaper, *O Globo*, the interviewee, Renato Russo, became incensed. Russo, aside from being a Brazilian rock superstar, national celebrity, icon for youth culture, and acclaimed poet of his time, was also openly gay. Yet after Russo patiently answered several questions about his sexuality, he bristled for a different, albeit related, reason. When asked if there was any truth to the spreading rumors that he was HIV-positive,³ Russo erupted, “Such bad vibes! I don’t have AIDS. What an idiotic question. They once asked me that at Circo Voador [an avant-garde venue for Brazilian artists in Rio], and I never went back there.”⁴

Russo’s outburst underscores more than mere irritation at the interviewer’s prodding question. After all, celebrities by virtue of their public exposure must forever worry about how they project images of themselves and about how their public receives and interprets such images. The interviewer’s question about Russo’s serostatus therefore reflected a more pressing reality: a host of factors, the most prominent of which was Russo’s homosexuality, incited speculations that he was HIV-positive. While Russo attempted to broadcast the representation of himself as a healthy gay man, his fans suspected quite another truth. As it turns out, Russo’s fans

² Cazusa, “Brasil,” *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988. My translation

³ The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) causes Auto Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), which includes a wide spectrum of physical ailments that are ultimately fatal. The term “HIV-positive” denotes that someone is carrying the HIV virus.

⁴ “Mas que baixo astral! Eu não estou com AIDS. Que pergunta idiota! Uma vez, no Circo Voador, também me perguntaram isso, e eu nunca mais voltei lá.” Renato Russo, Júlio Vasco, Renato Guima, ed., *Conversações com Renato Russo* (Campo Grande: Letra Livre Editora, 1996), 150. My translation.

were correct. Russo was HIV-positive at the time of the interview, but he denied his illness until the day he died, of complications due to AIDS.⁵

Renato Russo is merely one person, albeit a famous one, who was forced to navigate his way through the intersecting spheres of AIDS and homosexuality in Brazil during the 1980s and 90s. The arrival of AIDS in Brazil in 1983 threw many established customs into chaos, most notably the spirit of sexual liberation that had preceded it. AIDS arrived in Brazil during a slow process of political re-democratization. This process of re-democratization, called *abertura* (political opening), officially occurred from 1974 to 1985. *Abertura* was a centralized but lengthy effort to retreat from and reverse Brazil's brutal twenty-one year authoritarian military dictatorship (1964-1985). The period of the military dictatorship is difficult to categorize. During the military dictatorship, Brazil saw many advances, including a World Cup victory in 1970 and the Brazilian "economic miracle," a gross domestic product growth of an average of a staggering 11.2 percent yearly with relatively little inflation, from 1968 to 1973.⁶ At the same time, however, the period of the dictatorship was one that severely restricted the rights and civil liberties of Brazilian citizens. *Abertura* was the Brazilian government's attempt to re-democratize, which segments of civil society pushed to the limits. Yet just when the country enjoyed the new growth of many social movements that had been silenced under the dictatorship, AIDS brought many elements of Brazil's social progress to a standstill.

Initially referred to as a "gay cancer" or "gay plague" because its first victims in Brazil were gay men, HIV/AIDS caused widespread panic and fear because it was poorly understood,

⁵ Arthur Dapieve, *Renato Russo: o trovador solitário*. (Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará, Secretaria Municipal de Cultura, 2000), 11.

⁶ Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 293.

incurable, and virtually untreatable, traits people customarily ascribed to cancer and plagues.⁷ Because AIDS became synonymous with homosexuality, many gay men felt the need to re-examine the consequences and implications of being openly gay in the face of AIDS. Some men who had once proudly declared their homosexuality abruptly crept back into the closet, fearing that being openly gay would label them as carriers of HIV and, consequently, as social pariahs. Some gay men mobilized to fight against AIDS, strengthening their communities and uniting against the clearest threat to have ever descended upon them.⁸ They demanded rights for the ill and decried the commonplace notion that homosexuality implied AIDS, and vice-versa. While many men who were seropositive shrunk from admitting to their disease, others openly did, encouraging dialogue and refusing to live and die as outcasts.

This thesis presents the cases of three Brazilian male celebrities and artists—Cazuza, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu—who died of complications due to AIDS in the 1990s and were all in some way connected to gay communities. Cazuza, Russo, and Abreu, moreover, were strong voices for their generation in which their stories were paradigmatic of the events through which Brazil was living. They openly accepted or denied their seropositivity and/or homosexuality in varying degrees. This thesis argues that their decisions to actively accept their seropositivity and/or homosexuality in both their lives and work were reflective and emblematic of the culture of *abertura*. Moreover, this thesis maintains that Cazuza, whose admission to being HIV-positive in 1989 was a watershed moment in the history of AIDS in Brazil, was instrumental in inspiring Russo and Abreu's openness in relation to AIDS and/or homosexuality. The literal meaning of *abertura* in Portuguese (“opening”) signaled a phase in Brazilian history

⁷ Fritz Utzeri, “Vírus pequeno provoca ‘câncer-gay’,” *Jornal do Brasil*, June 21, 1983.

⁸ The word “community” may be misleading or problematic when used in reference to gay populations in Brazil. Unlike the United States, where in many cities gay men constituted circumscribed communities (such as The Castro in San Francisco or Greenwich Village in New York City), no such “communities” existed in Brazil. For the purposes of this thesis, however, the term will denote networks or pockets of members of gay populations.

that encouraged just that: a spirit of personal openness that Cazuza, Russo, and Abreu adopted. The political meaning of *abertura*, however, was more complicated. The period of *abertura* was a time not only of new democratic politics and discourse, but also of the continuation of many of the same fears, suspicions, tensions, and corruption that had thrived during the military dictatorship.⁹ For this reason, this thesis proposes the concept of a “long *abertura*” (as in, the “long nineteenth century”) that would extend from 1974 to 1994. The bookend dates of 1974 and 1994 mark important shifts in Brazil’s political climate.

Historians maintain 1974 as the opening date of *abertura*. The year 1974, ten years after the start of the military regime, saw General-cum-President Ernesto Geisel assume office. The year 1974 was one of internal turmoil. With increasing strength in the government’s only sanctioned opposition political party and an economy threatened by crippling inflation and the global Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil hikes, Geisel recognized that the time was ripe for his plan for a slow and gradual re-democratization program, *abertura*.¹⁰

As for the closing date of *abertura*, this thesis offers an alternative to the traditional date of 1985, the year that the last of the military dictators left office. It proposes that 1994 should serve as the end date of the “long *abertura*.” After Brazil had struggled through the pains of both the end of the military regime and the ensuing period of re-democratization—marked in particular by a deep economic recession in 1983 and subsequent hyperinflation—the year 1994 finally saw a return to a semblance of order in the country. The year 1994 witnessed the election of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the first direct election of a Brazilian president to serve

⁹ The notion that *abertura* had elements of both continuity and change is not novel. See, for example, Thomas E. Skidmore, *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), Chapter 8: “Redemocratization - New Hope, Old Problems: 1985-.”

¹⁰ Thomas E. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 171-173. Skidmore’s *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85*, along with Maria Helena Moreira Alves’ *State and Opposition in Military Brazil*, are the two authoritative English-language texts on this period. For this reason, they will offer the bulk of information on the military dictatorship for this thesis.

a full term since 1955.¹¹ Under Cardoso's administration, the runaway inflation and skyrocketing national debt that had plagued Brazil until his presidency finally saw a downturn, marking the beginning of an era of economic stability not seen since the dictatorship's darkest days. Moreover, it is noteworthy for the purposes of this thesis that in June of 1994, a mere seven months before the start of Cardoso's presidency, Brazil was awarded a generous World Bank loan to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in Brazil. This loan, in addition to the introduction of the effective AIDS "cocktail" drug therapy (Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Treatment) in 1996, meant that the period of Cardoso's presidency would finally see a shift towards stabilizing the spread of and improving the treatment for HIV/AIDS in Brazil, transforming the disease from unflinchingly lethal to manageable.¹²

The idea of the "long *abertura*" is useful for the purposes of this thesis because this twenty-year period was comprised not only of overtures to political and social re-democratization in Brazil, but also experienced many of the same ills of the military dictatorship that had preceded it, notably widespread suspicion of the government and general disillusionment. The "long *abertura*" was a complex and rich period in Brazil's history, one that simultaneously saw the alienation of Brazil's youth and its rebellion against social and political problems. The "long *abertura*," furthermore, coincides almost perfectly with the first phases of AIDS in Brazil, an era in which Cazusa, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu were

¹¹ The first directly-elected presidency after the dictatorship was of President Fernando Collor de Mello (1989), who was impeached for alleged corruption in 1992, and thus completed only half of his term. The periodization of Brazilian history is, contrary to the suggestion of designating a "long *abertura*," classically divided according to the different regimes that have reigned since Brazil's discovery. Generally they are split along lines similar to these: Early Brazil/The Portuguese Empire (1500-1822); Independence/Revolt (1822-1889); The First Republic (1889-1930); The Vargas Era/ Dictatorship (1930-1945); The New Republic/Democracy Under Vargas (1945-1964); The Military Dictatorship (1964-1985); The New Republic/Democratization (1985-present). See, for example, Robert Levine, *The History of Brazil* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999); Teresa Meade, *A Brief History of Brazil* (New York: Checkmark Books, 2003); Thomas Skidmore, *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, 1999.

¹² Eduardo J. Gomez, *Responding to Contested Epidemics: Democratization, International Pressures, and the Sources of Institutional Change* (PhD diss., Brown University, 2008), 36; Chris Beyrer, Varun Gauri, and Denise Vaillancourt, *Evaluation of the World Bank's Assistance in Responding to the AIDS Epidemic: Brazil Case Study* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2005), 14.

extremely prominent figures. During these trying times—in which inflation, a national debt crisis, political disillusionment, and AIDS rocked a Brazil that was still recuperating from the throes of its twenty-one-year military dictatorship—these three men embodied the spirit of *abertura* that continued long past 1985.

While AIDS affected thousands of men in its early stages in Brazil, I have chosen these three particular figures for specific reasons. First, I have selected Cazuzza, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu for pragmatic purposes. Because these three men were celebrities, information on them is far more voluminous and accessible than it would be for non-celebrities. Second, all three lived and worked in the public eye, which meant that the work they produced and the information they disseminated had a far-reaching impact that affected their careers, audiences, and legacies. Third, these men all vividly expressed and personified the triumphs and disillusionments of *abertura*. Their work came to define an entire generation that struggled through Brazil's lengthy re-democratization, particularly reaching out to Brazil's youth. Fourth, Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu engaged in active dialogue with each other. They were contemporaries, who frequented the same social circles and echoed each other's opinions and ideas in their work. The most notable examples of this are Russo and Abreu's references to Cazuzza in their work. Fifth, although these three men had many commonalities in their lives and work, scholars tend not to group them together in an examination of a particular place, time, and social stratum in the history of the AIDS epidemic in Brazil.¹³ It is important to note that, while this thesis recognizes

¹³ Although they have often been compared or cross-referenced, no work explores these connections in any detail, and except in a few cases, normally only two out of three of them are mentioned in concert. See, for examples of the comparisons of Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu: João Silvério Trevisán, *Devassos no Paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade* (São Paulo: Editora Max Limonad, 1986); Caio Fernando Abreu and Italo Moriconi, *Cartas* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, 2002), 13; Caio Fernando Abreu, *Caio 3D: o essencial de década de 1990* (Rio de Janeiro, AGIR, 2005), 10; Arthur Dapieve, *Renato Russo: o trovador solitário*, 2000; Ricardo Alexandre, *Dias de luta: o rock e o Brasil dos anos 80* (Brasil: DBA, 2002).

that these exceptional men's stories are not restricted to their sexualities and illnesses, these topics nevertheless form the primary focus because of the limited scope of the analysis.

The first case I examine is that of Cazuza (given name: Agenor de Miranda Araujo Neto). Cazuza was a rock star and sexual icon whose talent and good looks contributed only partly to his legacy as “the greatest poet of his generation.”¹⁴ After Cazuza was diagnosed with HIV, he ultimately chose to address his disease in a public manner, challenging the notion that “AIDS=Death.”¹⁵ Cazuza's solo albums are preoccupied with illness, dying, death, political and social corruption, and the disillusionment of Brazilian youth. Cazuza's “coming out” about his seropositivity was a watershed moment in Brazilian AIDS history. Cazuza's openness about being HIV-positive changed the discourse of AIDS from one that operated in secret into a household topic.¹⁶ A paradigm-shifter who helped to re-frame how people thought about AIDS, Cazuza's memory continues to have an impact on AIDS awareness in Brazil.

The second case I examine is that of Renato Russo (given name: Renato Manfredini, Júnior), the Brazilian rock star mentioned above. Russo openly declared his homosexuality time and again through song lyrics and interviews, demonstrating his belief that it was only through openly embracing their sexual orientation that gay men could fight homophobia.¹⁷ Aware that he was a vital role model for Brazilian youth, Russo subscribed to a policy of honesty: in addition to speaking about his homosexuality, Russo publicly acknowledged a host of personal problems, including drug and alcohol addiction.¹⁸ Russo, however, repeatedly denied being HIV-positive,

¹⁴ Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 1997), 165.

¹⁵ José Stalin Pedrosa, *Ong/Aids* (Rio de Janeiro: Planeta Gay Books, 1998), 12. I have translated “AIDS=Death” from the Brazilian aphorism “AIDS=Morte” that was predominant in the early stages of the epidemic in Brazil and had been borrowed from the United States in response to AIDS.

¹⁶ Martha San Juan Franca, *Repensando o modelo para a divulgação científica: o caso da aids na imprensa brasileira (1981-2001)* (Masters thesis, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, 2002), 69.

¹⁷ Arthur Dapieve, *Renato Russo: o trovador solitário*, 61.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 164.

which indicates as much about the fabric of Brazilian reactions to AIDS and homosexuality as does Russo's active acceptance of his homosexuality.

The final case I examine is that of Caio Fernando Abreu, an iconic writer and poet who openly expressed both his bisexuality/homosexuality and his seropositivity in writings, including in letters to friends and family.¹⁹ Abreu has been hailed as one of the greatest gay Brazilian writers, earning him a place, for example, in *The Penguin Book of International Gay Writing*.²⁰ Beyond that, prominent literary scholars consider Abreu to have been one of the most important contemporary Brazilian writers in general, and certainly one of the first to have dealt with AIDS in his works.²¹ Abreu's works not only touched the lives of countless readers, but they also demonstrated that he was hyperaware of AIDS because of his connection to gay networks.²²

Cazuza, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu's admissions of seropositivity and/or homosexuality were, admittedly, delivered in divergent ways and had different effects. Particularly in the case of Abreu, his influence was largely limited to the educated Brazilians who read his works. Abreu is not, however, any less historically significant than Cazuza or Russo with regards to depictions of AIDS and male homosexuality. Although the scope of Abreu's influence is considerably narrower than those of Cazuza and Russo, the media in which he specialized—stories and poems—are similar to Cazuza and Russo's songs in their capacity to express homosexuality and AIDS in ways that are both overt and metaphorical.

In order to best analyze these three extraordinary men's cases, it is first necessary to lay the foundation for the era in which they lived, followed by an examination of their lives and

¹⁹ Caio Fernando Abreu and Italo Moriconi, *Cartas*, 2002.

²⁰ Mark Mitchell, *The Penguin Book of International Gay Writing* (New York: Viking, 1995).

²¹ Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Histórias positivas: a literatura (des)construindo a AIDS* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record, 1997), 51.

²² Abreu's work has even inspired a collection of short stories edited in homage to him: Paulo de Tarso Riccordi, ed., *Caio de amores: contos* (Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1996).

artistic productions. For this reason, the thesis will be broken into six chapters. Chapter One describes and analyzes Brazil's political trajectory and social movements from the middle of the twentieth century until the early 1990s in order to contextualize Chapter Two, which studies constructions of (homo)sexuality, the gay movement, and the advent of AIDS. These preliminary chapters also aim to contextualize Cazusa, Russo, and Abreu in an historical framework. Chapter Three analyzes Cazusa's life and work, revealing how his open stance on AIDS transformed the ways in which the epidemic was conceived of in Brazil. Chapter Four details Russo's life and work, painting him as an icon of youth and harbinger of truthfulness in a country still engaged in re-democratization. Chapter Five discusses Abreu's life and work, considering particularly how he synthesized AIDS and homosexuality. The Conclusion fuses the ideas of its preceding chapters, engaging the reader in examining recurring questions and themes.

A Note on Sources

Many scholars who focus on AIDS have chosen Brazil as their field of study because of Brazil's status as a vanguard country in the global movement for AIDS prevention and treatment, an issue that will be further explored in the next chapter. The available literature on AIDS in Brazil is, therefore, very rich. Aside from articles in medical journals, research ranges the disciplines of economics, anthropology, sociology, and literature. One of the more popular research issues regarding AIDS in Brazil has emerged precisely because of Brazil's excellent reputation for prevention and treatment.²³ Many scholars have dedicated a great deal of time to examining how it was possible for a developing Latin American country with a host of domestic

²³ Tim Frasca, *AIDS in Latin America* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 192.

and international hurdles to forge such a thorough attack on HIV/AIDS.²⁴ Another newer branch of research focuses on the changing demographics of people affected by AIDS, especially how in Brazil the disease increasingly threatens women and children and has become largely a disease of the poor and uneducated.²⁵

Some of the most prolific authors of works on AIDS hail from the Rio de Janeiro-based archive/Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)/think tank *Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS* (The Brazilian Interdisciplinary AIDS Association – ABIA) and demonstrate a similar goal in their works: studying how AIDS—and the language associated with it—affects citizenship in Brazil.²⁶ The question of citizenship is a particularly important one because People Living with AIDS (henceforth, “PWAs”) constitute a prime example of a stereotyped, marginalized, and stigmatized group fighting for rights to which “ordinary” citizens are automatically entitled. These rights include fairness in and access to medication, habitation, and employment opportunities.

These analyses, however, often fall within the realm of political science or sociology. Many of the best histories related to AIDS are studies of Brazilian or, more broadly, Latin American sexuality and homosexuality.²⁷ This is true for two primary reasons. First, it is

²⁴ For these analyses, see, for example, Eduardo J. Gomez, “Responding to Contested Epidemics: Democratization, International Pressures, and the Sources of Institutional Change,” 1-61; Charles Klein, “AIDS, activism and the social imagination in Brazil” (PhD diss., The University of Michigan, 1996), 50, 81, 89.

²⁵ See, for example, “A portrait in red; AIDS in Brazil,” *The Economist*, March 15, 2008.

²⁶ “Citizenship,” or *cidadania*, in Brazil, unlike in the United States, gained a new meaning during and after *abertura* that came to include, besides the basic rights of anyone naturalized in Brazil, the right to be fully included in Brazilian civil society, including protection from discrimination. Interview with James N. Green, 7 October, 2008. Authors include Jane Galvão, Richard Parker, Herbert Daniel, Herbert José “Betinho” de Souza, and Veriano Terto, Jr. The theme of these works on citizenship can be exemplified by ABIA’s collection called “*Cidadania e direitos*” (Citizenship and rights), which includes Richard Parker and Peter Aggleton, *Estigma, discriminação e AIDS*. (Rio de Janeiro: Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS, 2001).

²⁷ For these analyses, see, for example, James N. Green, *Beyond Carnival: Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Luiz Mott, *Violação dos direitos humanos e assassinato de homossexuais no Brasil* (Salvador, Bahia: Associação Brasileira de Gays, Lésbicas e Travestis, Editora Grupo Gay da Bahia, 2000); João S. Trevisán, *Devassos no paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*, 1986.

impossible to analyze AIDS without devoting a considerable amount of time to sexuality and sexual practices, and vice-versa. Second, many historians consider the AIDS epidemic writ large to be too recent to be studied with enough retrospection. This thesis appreciates but challenges the latter assertion: the AIDS epidemic in Brazil has seen tremendous change in a short period of time, proving it ripe for historical analysis.²⁸ In the face of a global pandemic as devastating as AIDS, it behooves scholars to tirelessly examine its impact and progression. This thesis will borrow from neighboring fields, such as anthropology and literary analysis in order to meet that goal.

I had the privilege of conducting research at ABIA during the fall of 2007 and learned a great deal about how its authors focus on questions dealing with citizenship. The language in these books is often extremely careful and politicized. These authors maintain a concerted effort to reinvent common AIDS terminology. In dealing with homo- and AIDS-phobia, many Brazilian AIDS scholars insist on the usage of certain terms over others: “living with AIDS” is preferable to “dying from AIDS” just as “*soropositivo*” (seropositive) is preferable to the pejorative “*aidético*” (a sufferer of AIDS).²⁹ These scholars, sensitive to the power of condemning language, persist to this day in showing that PWAs possess an identity beyond their serostatus. They reinforce the notion that PWAs are not just walking “time bombs”³⁰ but also that AIDS is no longer imminently terminal.³¹ Many of these AIDS scholars were and are involved in political movements to demand rights for PWAs. Their works are therefore either implicitly or explicitly colored by personal sagas, punctuated by losses of loved ones, and

²⁸ To cite just one example, whereas the epidemic at first affected almost exclusively gay men, currently the infection rate among heterosexual women has skyrocketed. See, for example, “A portrait in red; AIDS in Brazil,” *The Economist*, March 15, 2008.

²⁹ See, for example, Herbert Daniel, *Vida antes da morte* (Rio de Janeiro: ABIA, 1989). “*Aidético*,” although it may seem a benign word, is considered pejorative because it limits a PWA to his disease and subordinates, or eliminates entirely, any traits irrespective of his illness.

³⁰ “AIDS: segunda onda de pânico,” *IstoÉ* (São Paulo, March 13, 1985: 32-38), 34.

³¹ See especially Herbert Daniel, *Vida antes da morte*.

sometimes even a sense of desperation in changing how Brazilians comprehend AIDS. As a result of these authors' focus on the politicization of AIDS, however, PWAs without active political stances on AIDS—such as Russo—tend to be ignored. This thesis seeks to find a space for Russo in the context of his illness and the generation into which he was born.

Sources I collected from ABIA have formed a large part of my research. While in Brazil I focused mainly on gathering primary sources, mostly articles from Brazil's leading newspapers, such as *O Globo*, *O Estado de São Paulo*, and *Jornal do Brasil*. I have supplemented these clippings with articles I have retrieved through Brown University's library and other libraries in the United States. The second major source of material I have used is that of works of Brazilian and international scholars, who have probed the history of Brazilian and/or Latin American sexuality. Prominent among them are Richard Parker, Jane Galvão, João Silvério Trevisán, Luiz Mott, Peter Fry, and Edward MacRae. It is my great fortune to list Professor James N. Green, my thesis advisor, among these experts who focus on constructions of gender identity. I have strived to weigh Professor Green's analyses of gender and sexuality in Brazil and the Brazilian gay rights movement equally with the other texts that address these topics.

In addition to print sources, I have had the great privilege of getting in touch with and interviewing Jacqueline Cantore, who was not only Caio Fernando Abreu's roommate and best friend for nearly twelve years, but also an executive at Brazil's MTV in the mid-1990s. Her information, time, and memories have been invaluable in piecing together the stories of these three remarkable men and the era in which they lived and worked.

Finally, my understanding of the AIDS epidemic in Brazil has been informed by extensive reading on AIDS as a global pandemic and by time I spent as a member of an AIDS support group in Rio de Janeiro, with the awareness that Cazusa, Russo, and Abreu cannot be

viewed or understood in a vacuum. It is for this reason that I now seek to contextualize their lives and work within wide phenomena of Brazilian culture in the 1980s and 90s and the history that preceded these social changes.

Chapter One: Brazil: Democracy, Authoritarianism, and Back

Amidst the color, glitter, and bustle of Carnival³² of 1988, something remarkable happened throughout Brazil. For the first time, the newborn National AIDS Program (*Programa nacional de AIDS*, an organ of the Ministry of Health) disseminated a message about AIDS that had more to do with compassion than with death: “Those who see faces do not see AIDS.”³³ In Brazil, a country that negotiates a complicated relationship between Catholicism³⁴ and tropical sensuality,³⁵ this stirring and demystifying slogan during the height of partying in 1988 was exceptionally radical. By humanizing AIDS, activists strove to shift away from the paradigm of blame and stigma that had impeded effective dialogue on AIDS for years.³⁶ The “Those who see faces do not see AIDS” slogan was as radical at Carnival of 1988 as were the distribution of free condoms and frank depictions of premarital sex.

³² Brazil’s famously raucous annual pre-Lenten festivities

³³ “Quem vê cara não vê AIDS.” Jane Galvão, *1980-2001: uma cronologia da epidemia de HIV/AIDS no Brasil e no mundo* (Rio de Janeiro: Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS, 2002), 11. My translation.

³⁴ Brazil is currently the largest Catholic nation in the world, even though many of its citizens are Catholic only nominally, and many practicing Catholics are also devotees of various Afro-Brazilian religions. See, for example, Scott Mainwaring, *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil, 1916-1985* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), xii.

³⁵ Brazil’s “sexual uniqueness” has been attributed, for example, to “tropical climate, lush vegetation, miscegenation, slavery, and insufficiently vigorous state intervention into the private sphere.” Diego Armus, *Disease in the History of Modern Latin America: From Malaria to AIDS* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 290. Images have long been projected of Brazilian bombshells, the most famous of which was perhaps The Girl from Ipanema, of musician Tom Jobim’s 1962 smash-hit song of the same title.

³⁶ As mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis, “AIDS=Death” was a popular Brazilian aphorism that was predominant in the early stages of the epidemic in Brazil. Moreover, new threatening AIDS slogans, devoid of hope, came back into fashion in the early 1990s, when frustration about the lack of available treatment mounted. Some of the most popular slogans in the media were, “*Se você nao se cuidar, a AIDS vai te pegar*” (“If you don’t take care of yourself, AIDS will get you”) and “*Eu tenho AIDS e vou morrer*” (“I have AIDS and I’m going to die.”) Jennifer Darrah, *Brazil’s Response to AIDS: Embedded State, Hybrid Institutional Spaces, and Social Movement Autonomy* (Masters thesis, Brown University, 2005), 44.

This campaign by Brazil's National AIDS Program was one of the first signals that Brazil was on a unique path to curbing its high incidence of AIDS.³⁷ And in fact, Brazil is currently regarded as one of the vanguard countries in the global movement for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.³⁸ Among Brazil's pioneering accomplishments are free and universal access to antiretroviral medication (ARVs) for all Brazilians in need;³⁹ re-negotiation of the prices for ARVs set by multinational pharmaceutical companies;⁴⁰ and the astonishing choice to reject U.S. monies from President George W. Bush's President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) on the grounds that PEPFAR's restrictive policies would not allow Brazil the flexibility it needed to combat AIDS.⁴¹

Brazil, however, had not always been so proactive in fighting against AIDS. In fact, in the early stages of the epidemic, Brazil was decidedly unconcerned with AIDS. As late as the final days of 1986, Jonathan Mann, the late head of the global AIDS program of the World Health Organization, claimed, "In Brazil, as in the rest of Latin America, the Government still wrongly believes that AIDS is not a major problem."⁴² It was only in 1987 and 1988 that large-

³⁷ By 1987, Brazil ranked third in the world for HIV/AIDS prevalence. Robert Tyrer, "Now the Carnival is Over for Sarney," *The Times (London)*, Sunday, February 22, 1987.

³⁸ Tim Frasca, *AIDS in Latin America* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 192.

³⁹ Jane Galvão, *1980-2001 : uma cronologia da epidemia de HIV/AIDS no Brasil e no mundo* (Rio de Janeiro: Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS, 2002), 14.

⁴⁰ "HIV/AIDS; AIDS Healthcare Foundation Lauds Brazil for Negotiating 30% Price Cut on Abbott's Kaletra," *Drug Week*, July 20, 2007, (Lexis-Nexis Academic).

⁴¹ Laurie Garrett, "The Lessons of HIV/AIDS," *Foreign Affairs* 84 (2005): 51-64, 62. According to "PEPFAR and the Fight Against HIV/AIDS," *The Lancet*, April 7, 2007: "The US has issued a report evaluating the US Global AIDS Initiative, commonly known as the (PEPFAR)...Overall, the report gives the 5-year US15 billion initiative high marks for substantially boosting the amount of money available to fight the pandemic and for rapidly scaling-up treatment and prevention programmes in resource-poor countries, something the report states 'many had doubted could be done.'" Brazil, however, chose to reject PEPFAR money because of PEPFAR's strict guidelines, which requires that "55 [%] of PEPFAR's funds go to HIV/AIDS treatment, 20 to HIV prevention initiatives (of which 33 must go into abstinence-until-marriage programmes), 15 to palliative care, and 10 to support orphans and vulnerable children." PEPFAR's constraints—which include, for example, the exclusion of programs working directly with sex workers—would have disallowed Brazil to conduct some of its most successful prevention programs.

⁴² Alan Ridings, "Brazil Called Lax in AIDS Treatment," *The New York Times*, December 15, 1986, A11.

scale educational campaigns were systematically implemented in Brazil.⁴³ What turned the tide to make Brazil one of the great champions of the global AIDS prevention and treatment movement continues to be debated. Some scholars attribute Brazil's turnaround to global pressure and support, most notably in the form of a series of World Bank loans beginning in 1988 to support endemic disease control.⁴⁴ Some scholars credit the rise of AIDS NGOs that pressured governmental organs in major Brazilian cities to act for change.⁴⁵ Many people argue that the spread of the disease, which infected an increasingly wide population, brought government officials to their senses.

But early on in the Brazilian AIDS epidemic, like in the United States, Brazilian health officials had considered AIDS a disease of only gay men; anyone in the so-called general population was impervious to it.⁴⁶ Brazil, moreover, was struggling to contain many other public health problems—such as malnutrition, schistosomiasis, and Chagas disease, conditions and illnesses often considered to be classically “tropical” in nature—that health officials prioritized over AIDS.⁴⁷ In fact, in one analysis of the AIDS epidemic in Brazil, writer Diego Armus claims that

Brazilian public health officials, along with many of the nation's leading media outlets, seemed to take a perverse delight in the idea that the country was experiencing a health problem identified with wealthy American homosexuals, a sharp contrast to the malaria, yellow fever, and cholera epidemics more typically associated with the Third World nations.⁴⁸

⁴³ Richard Parker, “AIDS in Brazil,” *Sexuality, Politics, and AIDS in Brazil: in Another World?*, ed. Herbert Daniel and Richard Parker, 7-31 (Washington, DC : Falmer Press: 1993), 24.

⁴⁴ See, for example, Eduardo J. Gomez, *Responding to Contested Epidemics: Democratization, International Pressures, and the Sources of Institutional Change* (PhD diss., Brown University, 2008).

⁴⁵ See, for example, José Stalin Pedrosa, *Ong/Aids* (Rio de Janeiro: Planeta Gay Books, 1998).

⁴⁶ Before scientists settled on the acronym “AIDS” to name the syndrome, it had seen a prior incarnation as “GRID”: Gay Related Immune Syndrome. Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 121.

⁴⁷ “AIDS: O que se deve saber,” *Jornal do Brasil*, October 10, 1985.

⁴⁸ Diego Armus, *Disease in the History of Modern Latin America: From Malaria to AIDS*, 297.

Although it is impossible to substantiate the insinuation within Armus's analysis—that Brazilian health officials delighted in sharing in First World problems—it is clear that, as AIDS spread through Brazil, the newspapers' tallies of the increasing numbers of ill, dying, and dead increased exponentially. Hospital beds were in short supply, blood banks were contaminated, and PWAs were often denied care.⁴⁹

Although Brazilian health officials' prioritization of other health risks over AIDS could be easily construed as homophobia, it is easy to postulate other reasons as to why health officials concerned themselves with other health threats more than they did with AIDS. First, Brazil did in fact face severe health risks from other diseases that had plagued Brazilian citizens in greater numbers and for a far longer duration than AIDS had. Second, early on in the epidemic, the biology of AIDS was unknown, so there was no way of determining the range of its effect or whether it would have lasting impact on Brazil.

There is yet another piece of the story of AIDS in Brazil that merits attention. The arrival of AIDS in Brazil is largely credited to middle and upper class gay, white, urban men who had become contaminated with HIV on vacations to large American cities with substantial gay populations. Because most people agreed that AIDS came to Brazil from the United States, it was logical that Brazil would have looked to the United States as its model for treatment and prevention—in addition to the fact that the United States was regarded internationally as the paragon of scientific research.⁵⁰ The chronology of the U.S. AIDS epidemic is beyond the scope

⁴⁹ See, for example: "Pacientes de AIDS têm 32 leitos em hospital alugado em São Paulo," *Jornal do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: February 15, 1986); "AIDS—219 casos no eixo Rio-São Paulo," *Jornal do Brasil*, March 13, 1985; "AIDS já afeta as doações de sangue," *Folha de São Paulo* (São Paulo: July 9, 1983).

⁵⁰ It is notable that Brazil adopted the acronym "AIDS" from the United States even though "AIDS" does not stand for anything in the Portuguese language. The proper translation of "AIDS" into Portuguese is *Síndrome da imunodeficiência adquirida* ("SIDA"), which is the acronym used in most other romance languages. It is a reflection of the extent to which Brazil modeled its epidemic on that of the United States, despite obvious epidemiological differences, that "AIDS" still reigns as the disease's formal name in Brazil. The American acronym "AIDS," moreover, signals the "foreignness" of the disease. Whereas in the United States officials blamed "third world"

of this thesis, so it will suffice to say that the epidemic in the United States was mishandled to the extreme in its early phases.⁵¹ This resulted in severe under-funding, pervasive misinformation, and widespread stigma, prejudice, discrimination, and neglect—both medical and social—for PWAs. Brazilian officials, who had adopted these cues on AIDS, fared no better than their North American counterparts in the beginning. Even though the two countries had two very different populations, the two epidemics were at first handled in the same negligent way.

Brazil was not alone in facing these specific problems in the early phases of its AIDS epidemic. These troubles constitute only part of the story, however. There were many other elements that contributed to how the Brazilian AIDS epidemic played out. It is important to remember that, although the AIDS epidemic in Brazil shares traits with AIDS epidemics in other countries, it ultimately possesses characteristics that are singularly its own because of a unique political landscape.

This chapter therefore describes and analyzes a host of political and social movements that shook Brazil from the 1950s until the “long *abertura*” of the 1980s and 1990s. This chapter lays the general historical foundation for Chapter Two, which describes specifically how homosexuality and AIDS would come to be treated in Brazil in the 1980s and 90s. Taken together, these chapters seek to establish the continuity between *abertura* and the history that immediately preceded it,—Brazil’s authoritarian twenty-one-year military dictatorship—proving

countries—most notably Haiti—for bringing the disease to the United States, in Brazil AIDS was an American “first world” disease that trumped the classic “third” world, tropical diseases aforementioned. See, for example, Nina Glick Schiller, Stephen Crystal, and Denver Lewellen, “Risky Business: The Cultural Construction of AIDS Risk Groups,” 1337-1346, in *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 38, no. 10, 1994, 1339. For further analysis of the use of the term “AIDS” instead of “SIDA” see Severino J. Albuquerque, *Tentative Transgressions: Homosexuality, AIDS, and the Theater in Brazil* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 6.

⁵¹ See, for example, Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1988); Larry Kramer, *The Normal Heart* (New York: New American Library, 1985); Michelle Cochrane, *When AIDS Began: San Francisco and the Making of an Epidemic* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

that, although *abertura* rejected the policies enacted under the military dictatorship, many of the dictatorship's problems lingered throughout the "long *abertura*."

Democracy, Dictatorship, and Back

When Brazilians and historians look back on the 1980s, perhaps the memory that shines the brightest is that Brazil, after having suffered under the rule of a series of military dictators for over two decades, had a chance to re-implement democracy for the first time since the 1950s. After over four centuries of mostly foreign or authoritarian rule since Brazil's colonization by Portugal in 1500, Brazil's first chance at democratization was not until 1946, with the ascension of democratically-elected President Eurico Gaspar Dutra. Following Dutra was President Getúlio Vargas, maintaining a democratic government from 1951 until his suicide in 1954. In 1955, Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira ran for president under the slogan "fifty years in five," a promise for economic and democratic progress in Brazil. Indeed, under Kubitschek, Brazilians enjoyed a period of postwar economic expansion, industrialization, urbanization, and prosperity, which included the construction of present-day capital Brasília and the introduction of car manufacturing to Brazil.⁵²

The experiment in democracy, however, failed soon after the termination of Kubitschek's term in office in 1960. Kubitschek's successor, President Jânio Quadros, abruptly resigned from office in 1961 after merely nine months as president. His vice president, João Goulart, assumed control, but found himself burdened with the wide array of political and economic problems inherited from his predecessor. Moreover, opponents of Goulart perceived him as a leftist threat to newfound Brazilian affluence: Goulart had allowed the working class and peasants to organize

⁵² Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 254-257.

under his presidency, and the rapid mobilization of the working class frightened the elites and military leaders. Conservatives named Goulart a Communist threat.⁵³ Tensions reached a boiling point when, by 1964, a cluster of high-ranking military officials conspired to oust Goulart from the presidency. On March 31, 1964, a military coup d'état successfully removed Goulart from office. That date commenced a twenty-one year period of right-wing military dictatorship in Brazil.⁵⁴

The years of military rule in Brazil saw ebbs and flows. The military's coup—which had started in 1964 as a temporary effort to stymie Goulart's alleged leftist proclivities—soon blossomed into terror. By the time hard-line military dictator Emílio Garrastazu Médici took office in 1969, the rights of Brazilians were greatly tapered. A series of authoritarian decrees called “Institutional Acts” (*Atos institucionais*) had stripped Brazilian citizens of important rights. Some of the most egregious measures within these acts included the capacity to suspend the political rights of any citizen, the abolishment of existing political parties and the indirect election of government officials, the establishment of military censorship of the press, the purging and closure of Congress, and the unconstitutional intervention into state affairs.⁵⁵ By that time, the torture and “disappearance” of political prisoners was widespread.

1968

Brazil's authoritarian rule did not exist, however, without resistance from Brazilian citizens. Historians recognize 1968 as a decisive and revolutionary year, both worldwide and in Brazil. Just as protests shook Paris, Prague, and major urban centers in the United States, so too

⁵³ Maria Helena Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition in Military Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), 5.

⁵⁴ Thomas E. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 5-17.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 20, 45, 82-85.

did they rock Brazil's metropolises. When military police forces murdered a high school student named Edson Luís de Lima Souto in a restaurant in Rio de Janeiro in March of 1968, this show of blatant brutality catalyzed a wave of intensive protesting that would shake Brazil: "In just one week there were at least 26 large demonstrations in 15 state capitals, and for a few days, because of the support extended to the students by the wide sectors of Brazilian society, the military government appeared to be on the defensive."⁵⁶ The student protests of 1968, in fact, were a critical factor that caused the military to enact the authoritarian Institutional Act No. 5 of December 1968. Born alongside the more public and widespread student protests were left-wing guerrilla groups that sought to overthrow the military dictatorship by subversion. Although a discussion of these groups falls beyond the scope of this thesis, it is imperative to mention that their tactics shone light both domestically and internationally on the dark years of the military regime.⁵⁷

Student protests were not the only movements during the long years of the military dictatorship. This era saw the birth of other important cultural movements, such as *Tropicália* (sometimes called *Tropicalismo*), one of Brazil's most enduring and popular musical movements. *Tropicália* is a complex and amorphous cultural phenomenon, expressed mostly in music, that escapes strict definition. As Brazilianist Christopher Dunn explains,

Cultural conflicts...came to a head in 1968, primarily within a largely middle-class urban milieu that opposed military rule. Artists and intellectuals began to reevaluate the failures of earlier political and cultural projects that sought to transform Brazil into an equitable, just, and economically sovereign nation. *Tropicália* was both a mournful critique of these defeats as well as an

⁵⁶ João Roberto Martins Filho and John Collins, "Students and Politics in Brazil, 1962-1992," 156-169, in *Latin American Perspectives*, January 1998, 166.

⁵⁷ The underground guerrilla groups *Movimento Revolucionário 8 de Outubro* (Revolutionary Movement 8 October – MR8) and *Ação Libertadora Nacional* (National Liberation Action – ALN), for example, kidnapped U.S.-Brazilian ambassador Charles Elbrick in 1969, which sparked not only national and international media attention, but also was a source of great dissent within the military dictatorship. For a discussion of guerrilla groups during this period, see, for example, Thomas E. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85*, 84-105.

exuberant, if often ironic, celebration of Brazilian culture and its continuous permutations. As its name suggests, the movement referenced Brazil's tropical climate, which throughout history has been exalted for generating lush abundance or lamented for impeding economic development along the line of societies located in temperate climates. The tropicalists purposefully invoked stereotypical images of Brazil as a tropical paradise only to subvert them with pointed references to political violence and social misery....⁵⁸

Combining diverse musical styles, the tropicalists emerged as Brazil's music counterculture, the most famous members of which belonged to a group of friends from the Northeastern state of Bahia, therefore inheriting the name *Os baianos* (The Bahians). Among them are Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil, still important musicians and public personalities today.⁵⁹ What contributed to the tropicalists' popularity was their ability to stretch beyond the classic bifurcations of elite and popular music, introducing electrical musical instruments to create what came to be known as a "universal sound" (*som universal*), which paved the way for new musical trends in Brazil, such as rock.⁶⁰ Some of *Tropicália's* complexity is due to the intricate wordplay that the tropicalists employed in order to simultaneously decry the military regime yet elude the government's censors, who sought to quash subversion in all cultural productions. The tropicalists, however, first attracted the attention of right-wing military officials not because of their overtly political stance, but rather, because of their irreverence: their hippie clothing, flirtations with gender bending, and anarchic behavior onstage not only threatened the status-quo the military regime wished to maintain, but also opened the way for new waves of radical musical production and performance in Brazil.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Christopher Dunn, *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 3.

⁵⁹ Their influence has been so wide that Gil, for example, was the Minister of Culture of Brazil from 2003 until 2008.

⁶⁰ Christopher Dunn, *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*, 65.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 161.

Tropicália was but one strand of the musical movement of the 1960s. It is noteworthy to mention that rock'n'roll had already seeped into Brazilian mass culture: the *Jovem Guarda* (Young Guard) was a group of rock'n'rollers that borrowed heavily from American and British musical influences. Unlike the tropicalists, however, the *Jovem Guarda*'s music "seemed comparatively unsophisticated," and many educated urbanites "regarded Brazilian rockers as pathetic and misguided imitators."⁶² Rock in Brazil would mature in the 1980s, but during the 1960s the greater musical phenomenon was an umbrella movement called *Música Popular Brasileira* (Brazilian Popular Music, or MPB), which encompassed many other important musicians, among them Francisco "Chico" Buarque de Hollanda, a fierce oppositionist to the military regime. MPB emerged among "young artists who aspired to raise political consciousness among urban and rural working classes [and who had become] increasingly disaffected with the introspective sentimentalism of early bossa nova."⁶³ Both *Tropicália* and MPB, moreover, were severely affected by censorship in the dictatorship years. Musical artists were required to submit songs to the Federal Censorship Service (*Serviço de Censura Federal*) for approval.⁶⁴

Institutional Act No. 5, the most oppressive set of laws passed during Brazil's military dictatorship, was implemented to stifle the dissent percolating in Brazil. Protests quieted, if they did not die altogether. Although many of Brazil's citizens recognized this new wave of oppression as an indication of the military dictatorship's cruel and arbitrary nature, the decision to support or reject the government was not necessarily so clear to everyone, including to a leftist

⁶² Ibid., 58.

⁶³ Ibid., 7. *Bossa nova* was an earlier musical movement of the late 1950s and early 60s that sported a jazzily melodic, nostalgic (sometimes even derided as "cheesy") style derived from the beat of *samba*.

⁶⁴ Buarque de Hollanda's experience with the Federal Censorship Service epitomizes the climate of censorship that pervaded in Brazil: the bureau's rejections of his songs became so frequent that he began submitting songs under the name Julinho de Adelaide to escape the gaze of the censors. Christopher Dunn, *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*, 162.

fringe group of clergymen within Brazil's Catholic Church, which spoke out against the brutality of the regime. The victims of the military dictatorship who had been denied their human rights, these clergymen argued, deserved and needed the support of the Catholic Church.

Contradictions within the Military Dictatorship and Popular Mobilization

Compounding these doubts was the fact that Brazil enjoyed great economic prosperity precisely during the time of its most anti-liberal policies. Brazil's military dictatorship was marked by a number of contradictions and ironies, one of them being the concomitant trends of great economic prosperity (the so-called "economic miracle," which saw a gross domestic product growth of an average of a staggering 11.2 percent yearly with relatively little inflation) and political and civic deterioration.⁶⁵ On top of this, Brazil enjoyed great worldwide esteem as victors of the 1970 World Cup, a glowing moment that happened precisely during the dictatorship's darkest days. Another surprising facet of the dictatorship is that the military government itself proposed the re-democratization or liberalization (*abertura*) of civil society.⁶⁶

The first indications of *abertura*—a plan for gradual, planned, and secure re-democratization—began with President General Ernesto Geisel's term in office in 1974.⁶⁷ Geisel had been elected to office in a two-party indirect election, in which Geisel's government party, the National Renewal Alliance Party (*Aliança Renovadora Nacional* – ARENA), battled the only sanctioned opposition party, the Brazilian Democratic Movement (*Movimento Democrático Brasileiro* – MDB). Although Geisel took office in March of 1974, in the November general election MDB enjoyed a huge national victory at the congressional and state legislative levels. MDB's sweeping defeat signaled to Geisel that the MDB platform of social justice, civil

⁶⁵ Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, 293.

⁶⁶ Maria Helena Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition in Military Brazil*, 173.

⁶⁷ Thomas E. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85*, 164-171.

liberties, and denationalization had wide appeal. This realization, compounded with a faltering economy and a loss of centralized control, compelled Geisel to introduce the program of *abertura*.⁶⁸ By 1978 Geisel had abolished Institutional Act No. 5, the dictatorship's most repressive tool.⁶⁹

This change in Brazil's political landscape must be attributed at least in part to the re-birth of student organization, which had seen a downturn during the Médici years. Even after the promulgation of the plan for *abertura* in 1974, Brazil struggled under a repressive regime, marked especially by the torture of alleged subversives. One powder keg moment was the death of Vladimir Herzog, a Jewish journalist and playwright who was arrested in São Paulo in 1975 on charges of communism by the state intelligence agency *Destacamento de Operações de Informações - Centro de Operações de Defesa Interna* (Department of Operations of Information - Center for Internal Defense Operations – DOI-CODI). Herzog was tortured to death under custody, but the army command issued a statement that he had committed suicide while being held. Brazilians immediately recognized Herzog's alleged suicide as a cover-up, which ignited fierce anger throughout the country.⁷⁰ Outraged students organized themselves in protest against Herzog's death.⁷¹ On campuses, left-wing groups organized students to become bolder opponents to the military regime.

According to author João Roberto Martins Filho,

⁶⁸ Ibid., 171-173.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 203.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 176-7.

⁷¹ Although author João Roberto Martins Filho argues that the student mobilization after Vladimir Herzog's murder never reached anywhere near the magnitude of the student protests in 1968, it is nevertheless a watershed moment of popular mobilization during *abertura*. João Robert Martins Filho, *Os estudantes e a política no Brasil (1962-1992) = Students and politics in Brazil* (São Carlos, Brasil: Departamento de Ciências Sociais, Centro de Educação e Ciências Humanas, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, 1994), 20-21. It is also noteworthy to mention that author Kenneth Serbin argues that the revitalized student movement actually began with the covered-up murder (claimed to have been a suicide, in much the same way as Herzog's) of student leader Alexandre Vannucchi Leme by DOI-CODI in 1973. Kenneth Serbin, *The Anatomy of a Death: Repression, Human Rights, and the Case of Alexandre Vannucchi Leme in Authoritarian Brazil* (Notre Dame, Ind.: The Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, 1998).

Since 1975, a number of student Left groups were slowly reorganizing in national terms, shaping what came to be known as the “*tendências estudantis*” [“student tendencies”]: *Caminhando, Refazendo, Unidade, Novo Rumo, Centelha, Liberdade e Luta*, etc. These groups reflected the transformations which affected the Left after the defeat of the armed struggle.⁷²

This resurgence of popular protest saw its largest incarnation in strikes in 1978 from organized labor, which began in 1978 with a sit-in at the Saab-Scania truck and bus factory in the state of São Paulo. The workers’ grievances were many, but perhaps the most pressing was that the minimum wage adjustment post-1973 did not match the rate of national inflation. The Saab-Scania sit-in spread to “90 firms in greater São Paulo, eventually involving 500,000 workers.”⁷³ The 1978 wave of strikes, followed by a second set in 1979 that demanded a wage increase, ultimately proved that the promised re-democratization of 1974 had not yet spread to government-labor relations but would desperately need to in order to be effectively implemented.⁷⁴

By the time João Batista de Oliveira Figueiredo, the last of the five military dictators, took office in 1979, *abertura* urgently needed to advance. And it did: the military regime scheduled an indirect election in which ARENA and MDB nominated candidates for president in 1985.⁷⁵ What preceded the 1985 indirect elections, however, was an ultimately-unsuccessful nationwide movement that erupted in 1984 called “*Diretas já*” (“Direct elections—now”). *Diretas já* demanded direct presidential elections in Brazil, and although ultimately Brazilian protesters’ demands failed to spawn direct elections in the following year, *Diretas já* nevertheless had many political and social implications. The most obvious of these was that

⁷² João Robert Martins Filho, *Os estudantes e a política no Brasil (1962-1992) = Students and politics in Brazil* (São Carlos, Brasil: Departamento de Ciências Sociais, Centro de Educação e Ciências Humanas, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, 1994), 20-21.

⁷³ Thomas E. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85*, 205.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 206.

⁷⁵ Parties nominated candidates and conducted the election through Congress without a popular vote.

Brazilians, enriched by the new leniency of *abertura*, could openly protest against the military dictatorship without fear of reprisals. What followed *Diretas já* was as seminal as the movement itself.

In 1985 the opposition candidate to the military was Tancredo Neves, seen as “a father figure who, as the first indirectly elected civilian president since 1964, could unite the country.”⁷⁶ Neves’s running mate was José Sarney, a senator with a mixed political record. Sarney had, for one, not only supported and defended the authoritarian regime’s anti-liberal policies but had actually jumped ship at the eleventh hour to join the opposition.⁷⁷ Neves and Sarney rode the wave of *abertura* to a stunning victory in January 1985.⁷⁸ Expectations for a democratic presidency ran high. The country was jubilant, largely because of the prospect of Neves’ victory, but also because a wave of optimism had erupted in Brazil since 1977, due to several movements that flourished underfoot, such as the emergence of an underground alternative press, the materialization of a gay discotheque scene, the rise of student mobilizations, and the advent of a period of economic prosperity. But the day before Neves was due to take office, he fell ill to an intestinal infection and was checked into a hospital for surgery. He underwent multiple operations, finally dying over a month later. Sarney assumed office in Neves’s wake.⁷⁹

Neves’s untimely death, beyond spawning countless conspiracy theories, devastated the Brazilian public. Not unlike the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in the United States, Brazilians saw their great hope vanish before he could affect change. Neves was elevated to sainthood status; the national “outpouring of grief exceeded anything Brazilians could

⁷⁶ Ibid., 250.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 252.

⁷⁸ Neves and Sarney were elected to presidency and vice-presidency, respectively, by a majority vote in the Electoral College, an indirect election that forsook the efforts of *Diretas já*.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 256-261.

remember.”⁸⁰ Moreover, not only had Brazilians lost their first opportunity in over two decades to elect their president, albeit indirectly, but newly-elect President Sarney had ties to the old military regime. Neves’s death and the subsequent ascension of Sarney to power exemplified the still-systemic political anomie and corruption of the country. This national disappointment, which occurred at what has traditionally been designated the end of *abertura* (1985), suggests that *abertura* was hardly over: with corruption as rife as it was during the Neves scandal and hopes for political democratization so brutally dashed, 1985 seemed much more like a continuation of the disillusionment and destructive nature of the military dictatorship than of the beginning of a new era of freedom.

The Latin American Lost Decade

To fuel Brazil’s industrialization during the military dictatorship—and to provide financial assistance in the wake of the 1974 OPEC global oil price hike—Brazil borrowed substantial funds with interest from private and public creditors.⁸¹ Among them ranked the United States, Japan, Germany, France, England, Switzerland, Canada, Holland as well as financial institutions such as Citibank, Deutsche Bank, Crédit Agricole, Union of Swiss Banks, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).⁸² By 1985, Brazil’s combined external debt had already reached a staggering US \$105 billion.⁸³

Brazil’s colossal debt resulted in a number of disastrous repercussions: Brazil cut back on imports and material consumption in order to export more goods, the sales of which would

⁸⁰ Ibid., 261.

⁸¹ The 1974 oil price hike contributed to the decision to enact the slow process of *abertura* in that same year.

⁸² Marcos Arruda, *External Debt: Brazil and the International Financial Crisis* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 8.

⁸³ Ibid., 6.

ideally amortize the debt. Cheap foreign goods flooded the market, which caused Brazilian companies to decrease their manufacturing, and incomes to decline.⁸⁴ The limited availability of goods, due to decreased manufacturing, caused the prices of available goods to climb indefinitely. Inflation gripped the country, and wages did not increase quickly enough to meet the ever-rising prices of essential goods.

Brazil was not alone in experiencing tremendous economic downfall in the 1980s. In fact, the 1980s are often called the “Lost Decade” in Latin American historiography. In Brazil, as in other countries in Latin America, a definite sentiment of gloom spread throughout the populace. Just as Brazilians had placed great faith in Tancredo Neves to rejuvenate Brazil after its twenty-one year military dictatorship, so too did they turn to another promising presidential figure in the early 1990s to upstart its faltering economic structure. President Fernando Collor de Mello, however, would not only prove to further weaken Brazil’s economy, but also would rank among Brazil’s most disastrous political figures.

Fora Collor *and the* Caras Pintadas

Fernando Collor de Mello was the first democratically-elected president since 1960, yet his presidency is intimately linked to the economic ruins of the Lost Decade.⁸⁵ Fernando Collor “assumed the presidency as his country was completing Latin America’s longest transition from an authoritarian regime.”⁸⁶ A self-fashioned outsider to the political system (who in reality belonged to Brazil’s age-old oligarchy), Collor assumed the presidency in the midst of the national debt crisis detailed above: Brazil had not renegotiated its debt and inflation was

⁸⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁸⁵ Thomas Skidmore, “Collor’s Downfall in Historical Perspective,” in *Corruption and Political Reform in Brazil: the Impact of Collor’s Impeachment*, 1-19, ed. Keith Rosenn and Richard Downes (Coral Gables: North-South Center Press, 1999), 2.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 4.

approaching 100 percent a month.⁸⁷ When Collor began his term, it was with great support from the Brazilian people.

Collor, however, would soon seriously disappoint the Brazilian public. He became accustomed to abusing power by utilizing a political mechanism that allowed him to bypass the vote of Congress. Moreover, Collor froze Brazilians' savings accounts and ended indexation in order to increase Brazilians' purchasing power. Both plans failed spectacularly.⁸⁸ Collor accumulated enemies quickly. A congressional inquiry was authorized in 1992 to investigate the snowballing charges held against Collor, which included embezzlement and corruption. The trail of evidence that tracked Collor's misdeeds was indisputable, aided by the sloppy record-keeping of his campaign treasurer, Paulo César Farias. After the investigation, the Chamber of Deputies impeached Collor by a vote of 441 to 38. In the end, Collor, like Richard Nixon in the wake of the Watergate scandal in the United States, was never forcibly removed from office, for he had resigned that very day.⁸⁹

One of Brazil's most defining social movements took place amidst the commotion of the impeachment. The impeachment in itself was a great achievement of the "long *abertura*" (the impeachment took place from 1991 to 1992, and despite being an *abertura*-age movement, it occurred a full six years after the close of what is classically designated as *abertura*), considering how rapidly a democratic institution such as impeachment found root in Brazil, mere years after the close of the military dictatorship. When Collor called for a show of support from Brazilian citizens against his impending impeachment, Brazil's students did just the opposite. In August of 1992, Brazilian youth took to the streets to demand Collor's impeachment. Often called "*caras pintadas*" ("painted faces") due to the paint they sported on their faces that combined the

⁸⁷ Ibid., 5.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 8.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 14.

Brazilian flag's colors and protest-black, "multitudes of students, principally from high schools, took over the streets of Brazilian cities."⁹⁰ The demonstrations were spontaneous and "reached an unheard-of size and extent."⁹¹ Some scholars agree that the 1992 student movement to impeach Collor, often called "*Fora Collor*" ("Out, Collor"), was the first example of effective student protest since the peak of student mobilization against the military dictatorship in 1968.⁹²

Youth Culture and Rock Music in the 1980s

Given that *Fora Collor* is considered one of the main expressions of youth unification since the 1960s in Brazil, it is ironic that the preface to Guilherme Bryan's book on 1980s Brazilian youth culture, *Quem tem um sonho não dança* ("Those who have a dream do not dance"), states,

There is a certain irony in the fact that in the 80s, along with a process of political decompression, there occurred among youth, here [in Brazil] and in the whole world, a cooling of the traditional forms of organization and political protest. For the first time in Brazil, a generation was born and raised under the absolute aegis of American mass culture, from TV and consumerism. Those who were born around 1960 did not have the experience of the political projects of national independence or of the militant affirmation of a Brazilian culture...

We can think of this "de-politicization," pure and simple...as [an approach] to issues that did not enter into the program of the traditional Left. The emphatic reclamation of personal liberties, the fact that drugs, sexuality, and pleasure became the order of the day, the rise of a more humorous spirit, disunited, celebratory, in an atmosphere still marked by pessimism and bitterness, are not characteristics so "de-politicized" as one might think.⁹³

⁹⁰ João Roberto Martins Filho and John Collins, "Students and Politics in Brazil, 1962-1992," 156-169, in *Latin American Perspectives*, January 1998, 167.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Writers Filho and Collins argue that because *Diretas Já* was aimed at one sole objective (direct elections) it was not a student movement with a unique character of its own. See João Roberto Martins Filho and John Collins, "Students and Politics in Brazil, 1962-1992," 166.

⁹³ "Há uma certa ironia no fato de que nos anos 80, simultaneamente a um processo de decompressão política no Brasil, ocorria entre os jovens, aqui e no mundo inteiro, um arrefecimento nas formas tradicionais de organização e

The pessimism and bitterness to which the passage refers includes reactions to the Lost Decade and the political disillusionment grown out of *abertura* and the missed opportunity of Tancredo Neves's unfulfilled presidency. Brazil had changed, and the problems that affected Brazil were no longer the same as they had been in the 1960s. And, as the passage claims, Brazilian youth's responses to these problems had also changed. The "long *abertura*" generation, though it had not experienced the most brutal and repressive (but also the wealthiest) years of the military regime that their parents had endured, nevertheless had not yet enjoyed the fruits of absolute liberty. This generation, moreover, was exposed to a trend of heightened globalization and imported consumerism, due in part to increased access to television and the abatement of the virulently Marxist and/or anarchistic attitude of their parents' generation. Aside from their own problems and methods of coping with them, now Brazilian youth could add to the tally the American brand of teenage angst, apathy, and responses that they emulated from MTV.

Just as *Tropicália* and MPB had been paradigmatic of the late 1960s and early 1970s, so too was Brazilian rock music "a picture of the times. You can only put this music in the 80s."⁹⁴ The stars aligned to create a wave of new rock music in this period—aside from Cazuza's *Barão Vermelho* and Renato Russo's *Legião Urbana*, other ultra-famous bands such as *Os paralamas do sucesso* ("Fenders of success"), *Blitz* ("Blitz"), *Titãs* ("Titans"), and *Kid Abelha* ("Bee Kid")

protesto político. Pela primeira vez no Brasil, uma geração nascia e crescia sob a égide absoluta da cultura de massas americana, da TV e da sociedade de consumo. Os nascidos por volta de 1960 não tiveram a experiência dos projetos políticos de independência nacional e de afirmação militante de uma cultura brasileira...

Podemos pensar tanto em 'despolitização' pura e simples... para questões que não constavam do programa da esquerda tradicional. A reivindicação enfática da liberdade individual, o fato de colocar-se as drogas, a sexualidade e o prazer na ordem do dia, o surgimento de um espírito mais humorístico, desconchavado, celebratório, num ambiente ainda coberto de pessimismo e amargura, não são características tão 'despolitizadas' assim." Guilherme Bryan, *Quem tem um sonho não dança: cultura jovem brasileira nos anos 80* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2004), 18. My translation.

⁹⁴ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

entered the music scene in Brazil—and this newfound freedom from censorship and repression induced a Brazilian sound, with bands that spoke the language of the people.⁹⁵

During this period, Brazil also saw the influx of heavier illicit drugs, most notably cocaine. For complex reasons beyond the scope of this thesis, cocaine from Bolivia, Peru, and perhaps from Columbia invaded the markets of major Brazilian cities, such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, starting in the 1980s. Before the 1980s, marijuana had been the primary drug available to consumers, one with which sub-populations of Brazilians had become comfortable, but according to one ex-drug trafficker, ““When cocaine entered it was different...it’s the nature of the drug that’s totally different [from marijuana]. Cocaine completely changes your personality, if you want to you can become violent, you become ten times more violent, more nervous, more startled, scared, everything multiplies.””⁹⁶ Even though cocaine’s usage was limited mainly to upper- and middle-class consumers in its first phases in Brazil, its violent consequences of its users threw into greater relief the social problems Brazilians were experiencing. Harder drugs would follow in years to come, notably crack cocaine in the 1990s. Unlike marijuana, which fostered a ““connection—political, cultural, and otherwise—with the feeling that people were becoming less uptight and that marijuana could bring more peace,””⁹⁷ cocaine and harder drugs were ““designed for the select few”” who could afford them and who experienced the drugs’ highs independently, further emphasizing the individualistic and edgy nature of the “long *abertura*.””⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Luke Dowdney, *Crianças do tráfico: um estudo de caso de crianças em violência armada organizada no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: 7 Letras, 2003), 32.

⁹⁷ Martin Torgoff, *Can’t Find My Way Home: America in the Great Stoned Age, 1945-2000* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 108.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 314.

Drugs would become a theme of great import to Renato Russo in particular. Cynical, drugged, and violent, Brazilian youth found themselves no longer offering the “exuberant, if often ironic, celebration of Brazilian culture and its continuous permutations” that had characterized the 1960s,⁹⁹ but rather, real critiques of the ills of Brazilian society and mimicry of American culture.¹⁰⁰ The post-dictatorship generations of the 1980s and 90s were the beneficiaries of unprecedented liberties. In 1994 Brazilians witnessed another watershed election, this time of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the first democratically-elected president to complete his term in office. Unlike the disappointments of Neves and Collor, Cardoso’s election began a new age of political freedom and economic stability in Brazil that continues to this day.¹⁰¹ His election, therefore, marks the end of the “long *abertura*.” Without the fear of censorship or retaliation that had clouded their parents’ generation under the military dictatorship, however, Brazilian youth experienced a kind of youthful malaise that had strong equivalents around the world.¹⁰² Brazilian youth consequently turned ever more to drugs and sex, as will be explored in depth in the following chapters.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, this generation—sometimes called *Geração Cara Pintada* (“Generation Painted Face,” named for the *Fora Collor* movement)—produced a new form of urban protest within rock music. It is important to note that there exists a tension in the historiography of rock music. According to the article “Rock Music” by Mike Denning, there are two competing visions of rock. One is that, “far from being a counterculture or oppositional

⁹⁹ Christopher Dunn, *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*, 3.

¹⁰⁰ Renato Russo’s band’s song *Geração Coca-Cola* (“Coca-Cola Generation”), for example, offers scathing criticism of the spread of mass consumer culture into Brazil.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Ted Goertzel, *Fernando Henrique Cardoso: Reinventing Democracy in Brazil* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999).

¹⁰² Of particular note is that Brazilian artists referenced the productions of American grunge bands of the 1990s. Nirvana, one of the leading bands of this grunge movement, produced a smash-hit song, “Smells Like Teen Spirit,” that famously deals explicitly with teenage angst. See, for example, *Renato Russo, Entrevistas*, DVD, produced by Marcelo Fróes (2006; Rio de Janeiro: MTV, 1993-1994).

culture,” rock is the mainstream of a culture. Another opposing view is that rock has traditionally centered on the relation to “youth subcultures” and is therefore treated as protest music.¹⁰³

In any regard, the rock groups that burst out of Brazil’s metropolises in the 1980s and 90s defiantly alluded to the unfortunate trends affecting Brazil’s youth. As Renato Russo aptly claimed, the *Geração Cara Pintada* was “in panic and in need,” and Brazil’s newly-formed rock bands were reflecting and expressing their disillusionment.¹⁰⁴ Rock music production and performance were concentrated in large cities, where youth were able to mobilize easier and to draw from the inspirations and problems that resided in Brazil’s metropolises. Rock pervaded urban Brazilian youth culture. It is telling to note here that even Caio Fernando Abreu, the only figure whom this thesis will analyze who was not a rock star, dealt very directly with rock music in his work.¹⁰⁵

AIDS’s Effect on Cultural Productions of the 1980s and 90s

Discussions of sexuality and AIDS would come to have a natural place in cultural productions such as rock music or novels. AIDS, perhaps the largest single phenomenon to affect Brazilian cities in the 1980s and 90s, would have deserved a special place in art for two major reasons. First, the mismanagement of the disease in its early stages in Brazil is the stuff of nightmares, which often elicits protest art. Second, AIDS began to affect an ever-wider circle of urban dwellers who either a) were so marginalized that they would need a celebrity spokesman or b) who were dying in such great numbers that it would have been an egregious omission for artists to mention other social ills but not AIDS.

¹⁰³ Mike Denning, “Rock Music,” *Social Text*, Spring-Summer 1984, 327-328. JSTOR.

¹⁰⁴ Renato Russo, *Entrevistas*, DVD.

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, Caio Fernando Abreu, *Whatever Happened to Dulce Veiga?: a B-novel* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000).

Yet AIDS and (homo)sexuality, whether taken together or separately, are such charged topics that their inclusion in cultural productions in the 1980s and 90s was not necessarily so obvious. In other words, many artists did not address these themes in their work. The absence of these themes in cultural productions of the 1980s and 90s offers as much grist for analysis as does their inclusion. It is in this vein that the next chapter examines in detail the complex associations of gay and feminist movements of the “long *abertura*,” constructions of (homo)sexuality, and the advent of AIDS in order to best understand the lives and works of Cazusa, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu.

Chapter Two: The Making of a Brazilian Epidemic

An Introduction: Social Movements in the “Long Abertura”

During the period of the “long *abertura*,” a number of social movements rose in Brazil, all with the general aim of promoting the rights of their respective groups and of being fully incorporated as citizens into Brazilian society. One of the most noteworthy was the feminist movement in Brazil. Scholars often attribute the rise of feminist movements across Latin America in the 1980s to the 1975 United Nations Conference on Women in Mexico City, but the internal factors that contributed to the movement in Brazil, however, are far more varied and complex.¹⁰⁶ In response to the oppressive nature of Brazil’s military dictatorship, Brazilian feminists focused on

...an effort to spread the feminist message to women of the popular classes, to link feminism to other progressive forces, and to relate women’s struggles to the society’s struggle against military rule. Feminists published women’s newspapers that were made available to working-class women’s groups in the urban periphery; they collaborated closely with women in the human rights movement and in the community survival struggles; they organized women’s congresses to recruit ever larger numbers of women to the feminist cause; and they actively promoted the organization of women of the popular classes.¹⁰⁷

Brazilian women gained significant visibility during *abertura* as they were increasingly able to engage in social protest and demand rights in a way that aligned them with other populations that had been repressed under the military dictatorship. Thus, Brazilian feminists took advantage of the period of re-democratization to redefine and expand the “prevailing notion

¹⁰⁶ Norma Stoltz Chinchilla, “Marxism, Feminism, and the Struggle for Democracy in Latin America,” 37-51, in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*, ed. Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992), 39.

¹⁰⁷ Nancy Saporta Sternbach, et al. “Feminisms in Latin America: From Bogotá to San Bernardo,” 207-239, in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*, ed. Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992), 213.

of revolutionary struggle, calling for a revolution in daily life, asserting that a radical social transformation must encompass changes not only in class but in patriarchal power relations as well.”¹⁰⁸

Social movements during *abertura* drew inspiration from one another. The Black Consciousness Movement (*Movimento negro*) was no exception. Afro-Brazilians, decrying the fact that the Brazilian legacy of slavery had left them bereft of their full rights of citizens, began to protest their perceived second-class status, drawing heavily from the success of women’s movements, which shared in their history of struggle.¹⁰⁹ Yet

finding little support from most existing political groups (including some on the Left who deemed such [social] struggles ‘secondary’), blacks and women elaborated new theories and new autonomous strategies for action. Due to shared political grievances and organizational dynamics, they would become the interlocutors and privileged allies of militant homosexual groups, who, like them, did not see any basis for downgrading their specific demands regarding their own immediate problems because they held minority status.¹¹⁰

What merits note here is that these social movements were highly related and interdependent, as exemplified by the relationship between the Black Consciousness Movement and the gay rights movement, mentioned above. The gay rights movement deserves special attention for the purpose of this thesis. In order to best understand it, it is first necessary to unpack the myriad constructions of (homo)sexuality that exist in Brazil. While gender and sexuality are difficult to define and generalize, this chapter will subscribe to the idea that there are certain tendencies that broadly mark the character of gender and sexuality in Brazil. After

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 214.

¹⁰⁹ Edward MacRae, “Homosexual Identities in Transitional Brazilian Politics,” in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, ed. Arturo Escobar and Sonia Alvarez, 185-203 (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1992), 190.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 187.

explicating different tendencies and terminologies within gay circles, this chapter will then return to an historical analysis of the Brazilian gay rights movement.

Constructions of Homosexuality in Brazil

Unlike in the United States, where people “expressing same-sex behaviors thereby [become...] homosexual,” there was not until recently such a standard in Brazil.¹¹¹ Rather than having one’s sexual orientation determined by the sex of one’s sexual partners, in Brazil sexuality has traditionally been determined by the positions within sexual and social relationships. Constructions of gender and sexuality in Brazil rely heavily on the bifurcation between masculinity and femininity, with certain sexual practices being ascribed to either category. As Richard Parker explains, the “distinction between masculine *atividade* (activity) and feminine *passividade* (passivity) [is] central to the organization of sexual reality.”¹¹² That is to say, men who have sex with men (“MSM”) may not be considered gay unless they are the passive partners in anal intercourse, men who have ceded power to assume the “female” role; MSM who play the role of the penetrating partner are, in fact, considered macho.

The complicated lexicon of homosexual slang and slurs in Brazil aims to delineate and categorize the sexual orientation of MSM:

The male who adopts a passive female posture—whether in sexual or social interaction—almost invariably undercuts his own *masculinidade* [masculinity]...The failed *homem* [man] comes to

¹¹¹ Peter Aggleton, “Under the Blanket: Bisexualities and AIDS in India,” in *Bisexualities and AIDS: International Perspectives*, 161-177, ed. Peter Aggleton (Bristol, PA: Taylor & Francis, 1996), 163. “MSM” originated as an American term designed to describe sex among men who did not self-identify as gay. It is therefore difficult to utilize this imported term in analyzing Brazil’s history of gay rights. I choose to use the term “MSM” in certain cases in this thesis, however, in order to underline the distinction between those men who self-identified as gay and those men who engaged in homosexual sex but did not self-identify as gay. Interview with James N. Green, 7 October, 2008. Furthermore, it is imperative to mention that constructions of male (homo)sexuality in Brazil are ever-changing, especially during recent times.

¹¹² Richard Parker, “Changing Brazilian Constructions of Homosexuality” in *Latin American Male Homosexualities*, ed. Steven O. Murray (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 243.

be known as *viado*...or *bicha*...due to his inappropriate femininity.¹¹³

Moreover, the “*homem*” (slang: *bofê*, or “real man”) contrasts the “*bicha*” (“fairy,” a slang word for the passive partner). MSM relationships are often modeled and dependent on the chemistry between *bofês* and *bichas*.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, “*bonecas*” (“dolls”) are effeminate, stylish men who seek out *bofês* for sexual activity, creating yet another binary based on physical and behavioral characteristics.¹¹⁵ More complicated yet, the aforementioned “*viado*” is the slur most comparable to “fag” and has spawned many derivatives all with their own connotations, such as “*vinte e quatro*,” “*fresco*,” “*puto*,” and “*entendido*.”¹¹⁶ The word “*entendido*”—defined by scholar Christopher Dunn as “a multivalent term that conventionally refers to those who are ‘in the know’ but is also used colloquially to refer to gays”—is an especially complex term. The suggestion of the *entendido* may be that those “in the know” are in fact the only ones who know, or in other words, no one discusses freely one’s sexuality outside of a circle of *entendidos*.¹¹⁷

Even the complex jargon of relationships among MSM does not sufficiently classify and explain their interactions in Brazilian society. In Brazil, sexuality can often operate on a “don’t ask, don’t tell” basis: as long as a man exhibits homosexual tendencies only in privacy, his public reputation is “saved.”¹¹⁸ That is to say, as long as he can project a heterosexual persona to society, (many MSM marry and have children) if he orders a male prostitute on the side, no one will necessarily consider him to be gay. This culture of secrecy around homosexuality inspired many expressions, the most famous of which reads, “Within four walls, everything can

¹¹³ James N. Green, *Beyond Carnival: Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 244.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 186-187.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 82-83.

¹¹⁷ Christopher Dunn, *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*, 172.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 5, 202.

happen.”¹¹⁹ The necessity to remain private about gay relationships, interestingly enough, contributed to the reality that homosexual activity often took place in public and anonymous places, such as darkened theaters, parks, and by the 1960s, in gay bars and discotheques. Out of this tradition, public spaces came to harbor private acts.¹²⁰

The ability for a man to practice homosexuality in private while maintaining a heterosexual persona in public could hearken to a longstanding Brazilian tradition that respects the dissociation of private and public acts. Although the boundaries between private and public spaces and acts is murky, there are cases in Brazilian history that support the idea that private sexual acts could remain shielded from the public realm in order to defend one’s honor, reputation, or status. One striking example was particularly common in colonial Brazil. Some women, usually of the elite classes, remained within their homes during their nine months of pregnancy if they had become impregnated by dishonorable means. Thus, when the women bore their children—who would have otherwise been labeled as bastards—they could claim that, since no one had seen the pregnancy, it had never happened. They could pass off their newborns as foundlings, return to the public realm, and retain familial honor.¹²¹ Another example was the hushed unions of masters and their African-born slaves during Brazil’s colonial period. Although in many cases it was abundantly clear that masters had impregnated their slaves, who bore children of mixed race, if no one spoke of it, the problem did not exist.¹²² Thus, the “don’t ask,

¹¹⁹ “Entre quatro paredes, tudo pode acontecer.” Richard Parker, “‘Within Four Walls’: Brazilian Sexual Culture and HIV/AIDS,” in *Sexuality, Politics and AIDS in Brazil: in Another World?*, 74.

¹²⁰ Richard Parker, “Changing Sexualities: Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Brazil,” 307-322, in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, ed. Matthew C. Gutmann (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 314.

¹²¹ Muriel Nazzari, “An Urgent Need to Conceal: The System of Honor and Shame in Colonial Brazil,” 103-126, in *The Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Lyman L. Johnson and Sonya Lisett-Rivera, (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 103-126.

¹²² Illuminating examples of this trend are found in tales of illegitimate children, or *expostos*, who were often the product of a union between a white male slave holder and a black female slave. *Expostos* were sometimes manumitted, which suggests that “their owners may have felt kindly toward the mothers and freed the (albeit less valuable and mostly female) infants as a reward for good services. These masters could well have been the fathers of

don't tell," "within four walls" policies of modern homosexuals cannot be viewed in a vacuum, but rather as a continuity of the ways in which Brazilian public and private sexual spheres are traditionally bifurcated.

Besides the social stigma surrounding homosexuality that caused MSM to keep their sexual lives "within four walls," there were also legal reasons for doing so. Although a penal code of 1830 decriminalized sodomy (a euphemism for, or perhaps a common definition of, homosexuality), police readily found loopholes to arrest men engaged in homosexual activity. These included "Public Affront to Decency," counts of vagrancy, and "disguising one's sex."¹²³ Almost a century later, during the military dictatorship, police conducted sweeps of downtown Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo to quash gay activity.¹²⁴

The clandestine nature of gay relationships—compounded by the difficulty in defining, describing, and classifying homosexuality—initially impeded the unification of gay men. Slowly, however, a gay movement did emerge from disparate pockets and subcultures.¹²⁵

According to Parker,

Although this emerging gay world [of the 1970s] crosses constantly with both the traditional world of active/passive gendered relations, it is nonetheless also distinct from it. Again, it is rooted in a specific social and economic system, linked to the processes of urbanization and industrialization that have transformed Brazil into a predominantly urban society.¹²⁶

Thus, some gay men in urban environments slowly came to unite in a gay rights movement, spurred on in part by *abertura*, which politicized many people and inspired them to

these slaves....Because no male declared his paternity for these five children, it remains uncertain whether the freed slaves were fathered by their own masters or by other men." Kathleen J. Higgins, "*Licentious Liberty*" in *a Brazilian Gold-Mining Region: Slavery, Gender, and Social Control in Eighteenth-Century Sabará, Minas Gerais* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 128.

¹²³ James N. Green, *Beyond Carnival: Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil*, 22-23.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 246.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 313.

¹²⁶ Richard Parker, "Changing Sexualities: Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Brazil," 307-322, in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, 315.

fight for the rights that had been denied to them during the dictatorship. Encouraged by news of international gay movements filtering into Brazil, the gay movement in Brazil was born.

The Brazilian Gay Rights Movement

Participants in the Brazilian gay movement hailed 1979 as a watershed year. In Rio de Janeiro in April of 1979 a new gay magazine, *Lampião da esquina* (“Streetlamp on the corner”), issued its first publication.¹²⁷ Shortly thereafter, an amalgamation of gay men in São Paulo coalesced into a unified group affirming and advocating for gay rights, *Somos: Grupo de afirmação homossexual* (“We are: Group of homosexual affirmation”). Gay men became more visible in Brazilian society, carving out new social spaces for themselves. In 1980 the first Brazilian Congress of Organized Homosexual Groups assembled.¹²⁸ During the course of the 1970s, additionally, traces of gay culture had entered the mass media. Brazilian superstar tropicalist musician Caetano Veloso projected images of himself as androgynous and bisexual, even prompting another Brazilian superstar musician, the openly gay Ney Matogrosso,¹²⁹ to kiss Veloso in public.¹³⁰ Taboos on male homosexuality were slowly breaking down. These were crucial and groundbreaking victories for the gay community.

Because the gay rights movement took place alongside other minority *abertura*-age movements aforementioned, however, it immediately and naturally drew from these movements’

¹²⁷ João S. Trevisán, *Perverts in Paradise* (London: GMP, 1986), 136; James N. Green, “Feathers and Fists: Socialists and the Brazilian Gay Liberation Movement in the 1970s,” 1.

¹²⁸ João S. Trevisán, *Perverts in Paradise*, 144.

¹²⁹ Ney Matogrosso would later become one of Cazuza’s lovers and producers.

¹³⁰ João S. Trevisán, *Perverts in Paradise*, 121. One such example of radicalized behavior is the launch of tropicalist Caetano Veloso’s album *Araçá azul* (“Blue guava”): “The inside fold-out album cover announces that *Araçá azul* is a ‘record for ‘entendidos,’ a multivalent term that conventionally refers to those who are ‘in the know’ but is also used colloquially to refer to gays. Although the recordings make no explicit references to sexuality, the album cover photo of Veloso’s scrawny and pale body in front of a mirror suggests gender and sexual ambiguity.” Christopher Dunn, *Brutality Garden*, 172.

politicization.¹³¹ From the beginning there were questions and strong opinions about who could and should participate in the movement. Some lesbians joined *Somos* only to find the male participants chauvinists without any understanding of feminism;¹³² some members of the group were Trotskyists seeking to spread the Marxist dogma through the equality of gay men, whereas some members wanted nothing to do with Marxism.¹³³ The atmosphere was ripe for disagreement, especially centering on the question of whether the gay rights movement should continue to link itself with other political movements or become an autonomous movement.¹³⁴

Shifting Homosexual Identities in the Gay Movement

Homosexual identities had begun to change with the rise of the gay rights movement. Fighting marginalization, many leading gay activists understood that they needed to re-orient the ways in which homosexuality was conceived in Brazil. According to anthropologist Edward MacRae, “the former emphasis on roles determined by sexual behavior (who penetrates whom) was displaced by a more complex view of relationships....In comparison to the old hierarchy captured by the expressions “active/passive” (*bofe/bicha*)...the new sexual categorization was essentially egalitarian.”¹³⁵ While the active/passive dichotomy continued to be important, the fact that gay activists sought to diffuse a less role-based model of gay relationships indicates the degree to which homosexual identities had begun to change in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

¹³¹ Veriano Terto, Jr. “Male Homosexuality and Seropositivity: The Construction of Social Identities in Brazil,” in *Framing the Sexual Subject*, ed. Richard Parker, Regina Maria Barbosa, and Peter Aggleton, 60-78 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 62.

¹³² Edward MacRae, “Homosexual Identities in Transitional Brazilian Politics,” 190.

¹³³ James N. Green, “Feathers and Fists: Socialists and the Brazilian Gay Liberation Movement in the 1970s,” 37, 39; João S. Trevisán, *Devassos no paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*. (São Paulo: Editora Record, 2000), 340-341.

¹³⁴ James N. Green, “The Emergence of the Brazilian Gay Liberation Movement, 1977-1981,” *Latin American Perspectives* (1), 1994, 47.

¹³⁵ Edward MacRae, “Homosexual Identities in Transitional Brazilian Politics,” 189.

One of the most fundamental questions that arose within the shifting compass of gay life was whether its participants need “come out of the closet” (publicly assume homosexuality) in order to best engage in questions of civil rights. Some gay groups, notably *Somos*, demanded that its participants exhibit an openly out, “militant” homosexual identity in order to prove that there was nothing wrong with being gay. Some men within groups like *Somos*, however, were unprepared to come out of the closet. These men, who still operated under the bifurcated public expression of heterosexual identity and the private expression of homosexual identity, were threatened by their counterparts’ demand for absolute openness. The ambiguous territory of whether to assume a homosexual identity plagued the gay rights movement for a long time, with one side arguing that homosexuality was an essential component of a gay man or group’s identity, and another side arguing for its inclusion in the gay rights movement regardless of its stated public identity.¹³⁶

With regard to all of these issues, the vanguard gay rights movement ultimately reached an impasse. Many lesbians who had initially participated in the movement created splinter groups of their own. The gay rights movement’s strength also declined partially because of lack of political definition and organizational skills.¹³⁷ Unlike in the United States, where anti-gay legislation existed, in Brazil there was no clear antagonist to gay rights.¹³⁸ According to writer João Silvério Trevisán, “what had always been a shaky movement was reduced to what it had never ceased being—no more than a rise in the homosexual profile.”¹³⁹ *Somos* had splintered into sub-factions by 1980; a year later, *Lampião* folded.

¹³⁶ For detailed theory on “closeted-ness,” see Edward MacRae, “Homosexual Identities in Transitional Brazilian Politics.”

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹³⁸ Edward MacRae, “Homosexual Identities in Transitional Brazilian Politics,” 196.

¹³⁹ João S. Trevisán, *Perverts in Paradise*, 151.

The Advent of AIDS

It was precisely in this period—in the midst of *abertura*, shortly before Neves’s much anticipated almost-ascension to presidency, and with the gay rights movement floundering underfoot—that AIDS first struck Brazil.¹⁴⁰ AIDS’s arrival in Brazil at this particular time was highly unfortunate, and even catastrophic, for a number of reasons.¹⁴¹ First, Brazilian civil society had been decimated during the long years of military dictatorship. By the 1980s, the possibility of open political organization was only first being reintroduced to Brazilian society. Years of having lived under the vise of the military dictatorship—and learning to assemble surreptitiously—had for many years rendered the process of open, successful mobilization a far-gone memory. Lack of open dialogue would initially have devastating effects on the campaign to fight AIDS. Social and political networks would first have to be rebuilt from the ashes of the military dictatorship before organizations could demand rights for PWAs.

Second, gay rights groups would certainly play a crucial role in AIDS activism in the 1980s as is, but had gay organizations been able to sustain themselves and thrive during the darkest years of military repression, they would have been doubly effective in the fight against AIDS in Brazil. As summarized neatly by Richard Parker, one of the leading scholars of AIDS in Brazil, the stifling of free organization under the military dictatorship had grave effects:

In countries such as Australia, Great Britain, or the United States the preexistence of a range of gay commercial institutions and gay rights political organizations contributed to an early community-based response to the [AIDS] epidemic. The general absence of such preexisting structures in Brazil (and the other countries of Latin America)...meant that...a response was slower to take shape

¹⁴⁰ The first case of AIDS in Brazil is thought to have been in 1980, but 1983 is the year that many scholars use as a cultural reference for AIDS’s first appearance in Brazil because it marks the first publicized case of AIDS in a well-known Brazilian—famed costume designer Marcos “Markito” Vinicius Resende Gonçalves, who died of complications due to AIDS in New York City. Jane Galvão, *1980-2001: uma cronologia da epidemia de HIV/AIDS no Brasil e no mundo* (Rio de Janeiro: Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS, 2002), 9.

¹⁴¹ It is worth mentioning, however, that had AIDS arrived in Brazil during the military dictatorship, the response probably would have been far worse.

and have an impact. Yet in Brazil, as much as in these other societies, it was almost entirely as a result of the efforts of gay political groups and AIDS-service organizations, as they emerged over the course of the mid to late 1980s and the early 1990s, that the mobilization of gay communities and homosexually and bisexually active men in major urban centers throughout the country began to take place.¹⁴²

Third, the ties between government and civil society had ruptured during the military dictatorship. Many citizens—in the full sense of the Brazilian notion of “citizenship,” as explicated in the Introduction—who had seen their rights stripped for twenty-one years no longer trusted nor believed that there was any possibility for partnership with the government. Especially in the case of Neves’s premature death, citizens felt that malevolent outside forces controlled their lives. This likely contributed to a notion that government officials had conspired to spread AIDS through the population, a theory that had many counterparts in the United States.¹⁴³ Paranoia prevailed. Without clear leadership, some Brazilians attributed AIDS to outrageous sources (including one case in which residents of a small town alleged that a maid had tainted the local ketchup supply with HIV-contaminated blood).¹⁴⁴ From the government’s perspective, it is possible that the policy of isolation from its citizens that it had established during the dictatorship continued when AIDS first struck Brazil, resulting in an unbridgeable distance between government officials and those crying for rights for PWAs.

Fourth, a general atmosphere of gloom pervaded Brazil, compounded by the fact that in 1983, Brazil faced a severe recession. Furthermore, most illnesses, but especially AIDS, have

¹⁴² Richard Parker, “Changing Sexualities: Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Brazil,” in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, ed. Matthew Gutmann, 317.

¹⁴³ Affonso Romano de Sant’Anna, “Os vírus da vida e da morte,” *Jornal do Brasil*, November 5, 1986.

¹⁴⁴ Herbert Daniel and Richard Parker, *AIDS, a terceira epidemia: ensaios e tentativas* (São Paulo: IGLU Editora, 1991), 24.

generated many metaphors.¹⁴⁵ In the case of Brazil, national illness and moral corruption—fomented by the military dictatorship and by Neves’s suspicious death—found a reflection in the new “plague” attacking Brazil. Despair and AIDS spread concurrently. In other words, “in Brazil, as in much of the world, AIDS is the most fitting metaphor of our time, linking sex, race, class, politics, and perceptions of the Other.”¹⁴⁶ These combined effects of mistrust of the government, a pervasive feeling of gloom and despair, and political corruption all contribute to the idea that the “long *abertura*” shared many traits of the military dictatorship—the country had certainly not been successfully re-democratized by the time AIDS struck Brazil—and that a “long *abertura*” would continue for decades to come.

AIDS changed everything, from the nature and focus of gay rights groups to the ways in which homosexuality came to be perceived in Brazil. Because HIV/AIDS was inextricably linked to male homosexuality in its beginning stages by the media and popular perceptions, many closeted gay men who were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Brazil were effectively “pushed” out of the closet. Beyond being forced to confront the “gay plague” and the impact it would have on their health, they also faced the ways in which their communities would perceive them (or conversely, in some cases the sheer fact of being gay was sufficient to elicit a diagnosis of AIDS).¹⁴⁷ Men diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in the beginning of the epidemic in Brazil often complained that the stigma of being HIV-positive or being accused of being gay was far worse than the symptomatic night sweats, pain, diarrhea, or body sores.¹⁴⁸ This caused many men to try

¹⁴⁵ See, for example, Susan Sontag, *Illness as metaphor; and, AIDS and Its Metaphors* (New York: Picador USA, 2001).

¹⁴⁶ Severino J. Albuquerque, *Tentative Transgressions: Homosexuality, AIDS, and the Theater in Brazil*, 10.

¹⁴⁷ Herbert Daniel and Richard Parker, “The Third Epidemic: An Exercise in Solidarity,” 49-61, in *Sexuality, Politics and AIDS in Brazil* (Washington, D.C.: The Falmer Press, 1993), 56.

¹⁴⁸ Herbert Daniel *Vida antes da morte = Life before death*, 26; Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Histórias positivas: a literatura (des)construindo a AIDS* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record, 1997), 93.

to prove their heterosexuality, regardless of whether they actually self-identified as straight, in an attempt to contest the causal relationship between homosexuality and HIV/AIDS.¹⁴⁹

An AIDS diagnosis teased out many gay men's most intimate lives in an unprecedented way. Under pressure they were forced to make choices: 1) deny both their sexuality and their seropositivity; 2) "out" both their sexuality and their seropositivity; 3) "out" their sexuality but not their seropositivity; 4) "out" their seropositivity but not their sexuality. This thesis will present these choices as central to the lives and work of Cazuza, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu.

Private and public spheres collided in yet another way. AIDS drew normally-private matters (such as one's sexuality) into the public sphere and normally-public matters such as a bout of pneumonia (which became recognized in the 1980s within certain circles as an opportunistic disease that was symptomatic of AIDS) into the private sphere. In a way similar to how one's homosexuality was *entendida* (understood only by those "in the know"), many seropositive men attempted to make their disease *entendida* as well. Gay men, who had for ages been marginalized and discriminated against for their alleged errant sexuality, soon found that AIDS exacerbated their preexisting stigma. After counting some victories in the movement towards gay rights, AIDS suddenly brought gay communities into an unwelcome limelight, drawing the judgment of onlookers who had never paid heed to homosexuality prior to the advent of AIDS.¹⁵⁰ Before AIDS, gay men might have been despised, repudiated, and shunned, but at least they were not thought to be contagious. The moralists in Brazil claimed that gay men

¹⁴⁹ It is noteworthy here to mention the media's portrayal of hemophiliacs, some of the earliest casualties of the pandemic, inasmuch as they served as foils to gay men diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. Hemophiliacs, considered "innocent victims" who inculpably contracted HIV through tainted blood transfusions, stood in stark contrast to gays, painted as degenerates who "deserved" or "earned" their disease through practice of unacceptable sexual acts. Jane Galvão, *AIDS no Brasil: a agenda de construção de uma epidemia* (Rio de Janeiro: ABIA, 2000), 174.

¹⁵⁰ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

were perverts who were receiving what they deserved: AIDS as punishment for their sins. The metaphors surrounding AIDS are numerous and were particularly destructive for gay men suffering from the disease.¹⁵¹ One of the best examples is that of Kaposi's Sarcoma (KS), an opportunistic cancer that affects the immunocompromised organisms of some PWAs. Because KS presents itself as lesions on the skin, usually purple or black, many people associated KS with the "mark of Cain." PWAs, in short, were pariahs, condemned by God just as Cain had been. They, the sinners and bearers of AIDS, were also blamed for the spread of the disease in Brazil.

Responses within Gay Groups and the Rise of AIDS NGOs

Ironically enough, however, the rapid spread of AIDS throughout Brazil "fulfilled in a few months the subtle and important role that the gay movement had attempted for years in vain—it demonstrated to the nation as a whole that homosexuals did not live in another country but in every corner of Brazil."¹⁵² Furthermore, AIDS gave gay groups an impetus to effect change and a clear sense of direction that they had previously lacked. At first, gay groups united to provide basic needs to PWAs and people in their communities: the maintenance of an AIDS hotline, free condom distribution, and the production of informational leaflets.¹⁵³ Later, they

¹⁵¹ See Susan Sontag, *AIDS and its Metaphors* (New York: Picador USA, 2001).

¹⁵² João S. Trevisán, *Perverts in Paradise*, 167.

¹⁵³ According to scholar Patricia Ann Caplan, condom shortages may have exacerbated the spread of AIDS during the 1980s: "Consumption of condoms during Carnival 1987 was so high that shortages developed in areas where the commercialization of sex is concentrated. Two months after Carnival, a section of Rio de Janeiro's downtown area was still out of condoms." Patricia Ann Caplan, *AIDS Policy in Brazil* (PhD diss., University of Texas-Austin, 1988), 62. Condom shortages in the late 1980s in Brazil have been attributed to two factors: AIDS and inflation. Many people hoarded condoms in reaction to AIDS, fearing that the price of condoms would skyrocket due to the high inflation that rocked Brazil in the 1980s. This caused severe shortages in condoms in Brazilian urban centers. (See Robert Tyrer, "Now the Carnival is Over for Sarney," *The Times (London)*, Sunday, February 22, 1987); Richard Parker, "Changing Sexualities: Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Brazil," 318.

developed more ambitious projects, such as pressuring the government and media to run national AIDS awareness campaigns.

As AIDS continued to spread in Brazil, the weak structures of gay groups were no longer sufficient to combat an entire epidemic. Soon, new organizations arose specifically in response to AIDS.¹⁵⁴ Unfortunately, vestigial tension from the dictatorship years meant at first that the government and NGOs worked independently of each other to fight AIDS.¹⁵⁵ Soon, however, AIDS NGOs in Brazil began to understand that their funds were too limited and their audiences too narrow to prevent AIDS from spreading through the entire country. They began to pressure the government to take a stand against AIDS. Effectively, therefore, the task of almost all AIDS NGOs became social control: “the goal was never to simply provide health services, but rather to push the state to do its job and to oversee or ‘control’ state activities and policies.”¹⁵⁶

When analyzing the rise of AIDS NGOs in Brazil, it is imperative to mention two important figures who contributed greatly to combating stigma against PWAs at the time. The first is Herbert “Betinho” de Souza, a much acclaimed sociologist and activist. Betinho was one of three heterosexual hemophiliac brothers—his brother Henfil was a famed political caricaturist and cartoonist—all of whom contracted HIV through contaminated blood transfusions. The de Souza brothers’ cases attracted a lot of critical media attention for several reasons. First, the demise of the three brothers was heartbreaking. Second, their solidarity and support of each other in times of mutual struggle was heartwarming. Third, they had been renowned figures in Brazilian contemporary life even before contracting HIV/AIDS, which shed some much-needed publicity on the disease. Fourth, the de Souza brothers’ deaths had the counteracting double

¹⁵⁴ Richard Parker, “AIDS in Brazil,” 25.

¹⁵⁵ José Stalin Pedrosa, *Ong/Aids*, 13.

¹⁵⁶ See Jennifer Darrah, *Brazil's Response to AIDS: Embedded State, Hybrid Institutional Spaces, and Social Movement Autonomy*, 20. It is notable that today the National Program on AIDS in Brazil recognizes several NGOs as their official partners in combating AIDS.

effect of simultaneously showing that a) AIDS affected people other than gay men, but, in doing so b) presented hemophiliacs as “innocent” victims who had contracted the disease undeservingly as opposed to their gay counterparts who were “guilty” of contracting the disease for having engaged in allegedly unacceptable sexual acts.

Betinho founded the Rio de Janeiro-based archive-NGO-think tank The Brazilian Interdisciplinary AIDS Association (*Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS*– ABIA) in 1986. Until his death in 1997, he was a fierce advocate for PWAs, promoting the rights of people who had been marginalized because of their seropositivity. Besides Betinho, the nucleus of ABIA’s first members and leaders included Richard Parker, a medical anthropologist and executive director of ABIA; Jane Galvão, the former general coordinator of ABIA; and Herbert Daniel, an activist, revolutionary against the military dictatorship, and writer.

According to scholar Marcelo Secron Bessa, Daniel was “the voice of the epidemic” in Brazil.¹⁵⁷ A prolific author who was openly and proudly gay, Daniel was the champion of politicizing the language associated with AIDS.¹⁵⁸ One of Daniel’s most important concepts was that of “*morte civil*,” or “civil death,” which he defined as the rapid exclusion of PWAs from all aspects of civil society, which resulted in their difficulty in finding love, work, happiness, security, or peace.¹⁵⁹ The idea of “*morte civil*” emerged from the fact that PWAs were generally considered to be social pariahs, amoral, immoral, degenerates, harbingers of death, and responsible for further transmission of HIV. Thus, Daniel and his associates had the double task of battling for medical rights for PWAs (affordable medication and healthcare) and for the civil rights that PWAs deserved (equal treatment and inclusion in society, the full benefits of Brazilian

¹⁵⁷ Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos: autobiografias e AIDS* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, ABIA, 2002), 61.

¹⁵⁸ Daniel, for example, emphasized the usage of “living with AIDS” as opposed to “dying from AIDS.”

¹⁵⁹ As explained in the introduction, citizenship (*cidadania*) in Brazil encompassed all the social rights that any person deserves. “*Morte civil*” was therefore a tremendous affront to post-dictatorship conceptions of citizenship.

citizenship in the age of *abertura*). Daniel eventually formed a splinter group from ABIA in 1989 called Pela VIDDA (*Pela Valorização, Integração e Dignidade do Doente de AIDS*– “For the Valorization, Integration, and Dignity of the AIDS Patient,” which exists until this day with the goal to empower PWAs by seeking their full inclusion in civic society.

Phases in the Process of Fighting AIDS in Brazil

Richard Parker delineates four major phases of the AIDS epidemic in Brazil. The first, from 1982 until 1985, saw the beginning of the epidemic and the formation of various NGOs and the creation of the National AIDS Program.¹⁶⁰ This first phase was characterized by denial. The lack of clear national or international leadership fomented the formation of grassroots organizations to combat the disease. These groups’ excellent initiatives pressured a federal response, culminating in the organization of the aforementioned National AIDS Program.¹⁶¹

The second phase of the epidemic lasted from 1986 until 1990, wherein the federal government stepped in to organize around the disease and participated in the international dialogue on AIDS. The number of AIDS NGOs increased, and PWAs began mobilizing to demand their rights, turning AIDS from a medical issue into a social phenomenon that was affecting communities.¹⁶²

The third phase, 1990 to 1992, was marked by a great deal of unfulfilled optimism in combating AIDS that would not produce results until the fourth phase of the epidemic, from 1992 until present day. Although today NGOs and governmental programs work in concert, this was not the case from 1990 to 1992.¹⁶³ The major factor that contributed to the downfall of the

¹⁶⁰ Richard Parker, *Políticas, Instituições e AIDS: Enfrentando a AIDS no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: ABIA, 1997), 9.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11.

AIDS awareness campaigns in this two-year span was the shortage of available funding to fight the AIDS epidemic, enabled by the corruption within the disastrous presidency of Fernando Collor de Mello (president 1990-1992). Public health crises are costly everywhere, but the economic downturn that Brazil saw in the 1980s was especially instrumental in determining Brazil's glum national mood.

AIDS and the Lost Decade

When AIDS hit Brazil, the price of medical care for PWAs soared to astronomical heights. The expense of treating PWAs was exorbitant worldwide, but Brazil suffered particular hardship because of the skyrocketing inflation and national debts that swept through Latin America in the 1980s. Effective therapy to treat HIV/AIDS—today called Highly Active Retroviral Therapy (HAART), which is sometimes administered as a cocktail of different drugs—was not available until the late 1990s. Thus, in the early stages of the epidemic in Brazil and elsewhere, symptomatic treatment was the only recourse for medically addressing HIV/AIDS. This meant that clinicians administered a different treatment for the seemingly limitless opportunistic diseases that struck PWAs, such as: antibiotics for pneumonia, toxoplasmosis, tuberculosis, and parasitic infections; chemotherapy for Kaposi's Sarcoma and other tumors; and intravenous antifungal drugs for cryptococcosis.¹⁶⁴ These disparate treatments, which were expensive, difficult to administer, and ultimately ineffectual, burdened the public health care system tremendously.

In Brazil, “the only systematic study on expenses [of treating PWAs], conducted in 1989, indicated an annual cost of \$16,689 in hospital costs per patient, per year—which is considered

¹⁶⁴ The Center for Disease Control in the United States designates 27 opportunistic diseases as AIDS-defining conditions. “Appendix A: AIDS Defining Conditions.” *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, December 5, 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5710a2.htm>. 15 December 2008.

elevated in international terms.”¹⁶⁵ Although detailed economic analysis lies far beyond the scope of this thesis, it is imperative to mention a few key points of Brazil’s foreign debt crisis of the 1980s. The economic failures of the Lost Decade constituted one of the major obstacles to treating AIDS and preventing and controlling the epidemic. According to a 1992 article by Ronald St. John of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO),

In Brazil...aerosolized pentamidine to treat *Pneumocystis carinii* infections [a normally-rare type of pneumonia that presents itself commonly as an opportunistic infection of AIDS] in AIDS cases is not available because it has to be imported, utilizing scarce foreign-exchange reserves. The US\$10 million national AIDS education campaign has been scaled down to \$2.5-3 million. There are approximately four million blood transfusions per year in Brazil, and it currently costs US\$1 for a single ELISA test [Enzyme Link Immunosorbent Assay, one of the more sophisticated and consistent tests to detect HIV in the blood], which must be imported. Can this country devote \$4 million per year of its foreign-exchange earnings to finance one ELISA screen per blood transfusion?¹⁶⁶

Although Brazilian PWAs may not have been aware of the startling national cost of AIDS, on the personal level the consequences were both real and devastating. A 1985 article in Rio de Janeiro’s leading newspaper claimed, for example, that there were only 40 hospital beds available for PWAs in all of São Paulo, one of the largest cities in the world.¹⁶⁷ Although some of the reasons for inadequate care for PWAs undoubtedly fall to discrimination, Brazil’s struggling economy played a decisive role.

Concluding Remarks

¹⁶⁵ Richard Parker, “AIDS in Brazil,” 37.

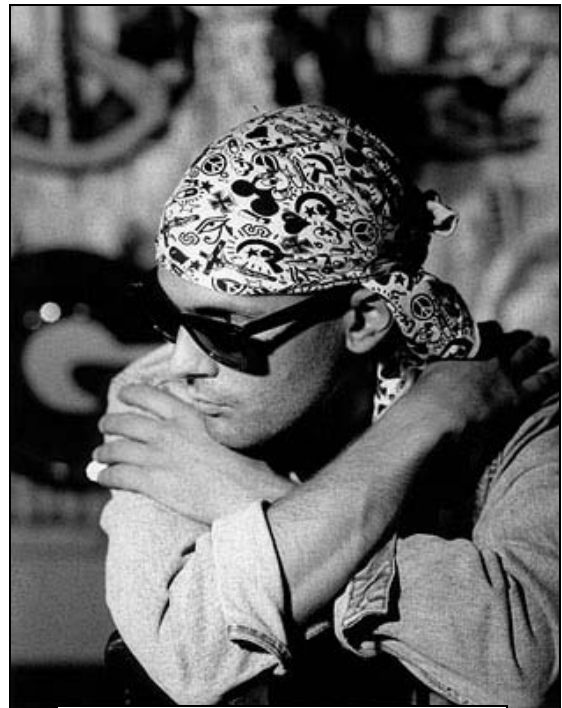
¹⁶⁶ Ronald St. John, “Crisis Within a Crisis: AIDS and Health Care in Latin America and the Caribbean,” in *Health and Health Care in Latin America During the Lost Decade: Insights for the 1990s*, 275-288, ed. Connie Weil and Joseph Scarpaci (Iowa City: the Center for International and Comparative Studies at the University of Iowa and the University of Iowa Libraries, 1992), 280.

¹⁶⁷ “Hospital das clínicas amplia número de leitos para AIDS de 6 para 26,” *Jornal do Brasil*, August 14, 1985, 8.

It is with this background of the many tensions embodied in the gay rights movement and the advent of AIDS that this thesis examines the lives and works of Cazuzza, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu. The goal of this analysis is, broadly stated, to ascertain how their approaches to dealing with (homo)sexuality and/or AIDS reflected broadly on the cultural climate of the “long *abertura*,” in which they and their art were born. Although Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu represent PWAs of the “long *abertura*” period with ties to gay communities, their stories absorbed Brazil’s cultural climate in many other ways, which the following chapters now seek to explicate.



Cazuza, 1988. Source: Cazuza.com.br



Cazuza, 1988. Source: Cazuza.com.br

Chapter Three: Cazuzo: Iconoclastic Youth, Transcendental Death

When Brazilian rock legend and heartthrob Cazuzo died on July 7, 1990 from complications due to AIDS, thousands of fans trailed the coffin to accompany Cazuzo to his final resting place.¹⁶⁸ They waved album jackets, singing Cazuzo's songs. The fact that Cazuzo shared his final death rite with thousands of fans, however, was not unusual: Cazuzo's followers had participated for years in his process of coping with death, which Cazuzo had expressed through vivid song lyrics. As extraordinary as circumstances surrounding Cazuzo were in death, so were they in life. Tanned, handsome, charismatic, and privileged, Cazuzo was the enviable boy from Ipanema, the seat of Rio de Janeiro's upscale lifestyle. Cazuzo had floundered in his youth, dropping out of school and spending his days, unemployed, at the beach. Yet when Cazuzo found his life calling in music, he abandoned his theretofore carefree lifestyle and instead pursued his dream of making music, even through the debilitating effects of AIDS, inspiring his generation and country at large with his brave comportment.

The aims of this chapter are manifold. The chapter seeks to present Cazuzo as a powerful figure, someone who was equipped with the talent, charisma, and courage to transform AIDS into a topic of household discussion. Cazuzo was, indeed, the first major celebrity to publicly declare his seropositivity in Brazil. This chapter argues that Cazuzo's experience with HIV/AIDS was an important paradigm-shifter in Brazil's AIDS history: like basketball star Magic Johnson's declaration of seropositivity in the United States, Cazuzo's choice to deal with his illness in a very public way transformed AIDS from a narrowly-defined "gay plague" or "gay cancer" into a

¹⁶⁸ Paul Knox, "Fans Follow Cazuzo to Grave, Rock Singer Brazil's Best-Known Victim of AIDS," *The Globe and Mail*, July 9, 1990.

disease that could infect anyone and everyone—even rock stars.¹⁶⁹ When Cazuzza, beloved and famous, concertedly turned his private illness into a public phenomenon through explicit song lyrics and candid interviews, the barriers of entry to speaking about AIDS broke down at least a little bit in Brazil. According to ABIA founder Herbert “Betinho” de Souza, who was also HIV-positive, Cazuzza’s public admission of seropositivity helped ““remove stigma from the disease.””¹⁷⁰ This chapter will further argue that Cazuzza’s entire persona, including his musical productions, was reflective of the culture of the “long *abertura*” explicated in the Introduction to this thesis.

Cazuzza: Early Days

Agenor de Miranda de Araujo Neto was born on April 3, 1958, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Called Cazuzza (a slang word and term of endearment in the Northeast of Brazil for “wasp” or “little black boy” or “street urchin”) from birth, he was an only child whose precociousness forever monopolized his adoring parents’ attention. His mother, Maria Lúcia “Lucinha” Araujo, was a tailor and aspiring singer who likely influenced her son. His father, João Araujo, was a distinguished producer at *Som Livre*, Brazil’s preeminent recording label at the time. It was in this atmosphere rich with music that Cazuzza was raised. Born during Brazil’s *Bossa nova*

¹⁶⁹ Some scholars mark a new phase, or rupture, in the epidemic in which AIDS began to be portrayed as affecting bisexuals and not exclusively gay men. This switch was the first of many indications that AIDS would come to affect the “general” (i.e. heterosexual) population. See Luiz Mott, “Crise da Aids reprime bissexualidade tropicalista,” *Folha de São Paulo*, September 30, 1993. In fact, an article in the *Boston Globe* in April 1989 specifically named bisexual men “the ‘bridge’ of transmission of the AIDS virus between homosexual men and heterosexuals” (Judy Foreman, “‘Ominous’ Signs found on AIDS Spread,” *The Boston Globe*, April 13, 1989, 28). It is important to note that another American celebrity has traditionally marked a phase of the AIDS epidemic in the United States. Rock Hudson, an American actor who died of complications due to AIDS on October 2, 1985, was one of the first celebrities to admit to his illness, albeit under duress. Rock Hudson’s admission of seropositivity, unlike Magic Johnson’s, immediately implied that he was gay.

¹⁷⁰ ““Ele está ajudando a tirar o estigma da doença.”” Angela Abreu and Alessandro Porro, “Cazuzza: uma vítima da AIDS agoniza em praça pública,” *Veja*, April 26, 1989, 85. Cazuzza’s case, in fact, came at a time when health care professionals switched from designating “risk groups”—notably composed of gay men, who were thought to be at the highest risk of HIV contraction—to “risk behaviors,” such as needle-sharing and unprotected sex.

movement (1958-1963) to parents involved in the music world, Cazuza grew up with the biggest musical celebrities of *Bossa nova* and MPB frequenting his home.¹⁷¹ The same *Tropicália* icons who partied with Cazuza's parents would become later important influences and advocates in Cazuza's musical career.¹⁷² Yet Cazuza would not connect with his own musical talent and ability for years to come. He first had to pass through a tumultuous childhood.

Much of the comprehensive information on Cazuza's childhood derives from Lucinha's memoirs as told to author Regina Echeverria, *Só as mães são felizes* ("Only Mothers are Happy," named after one of Cazuza's smash hit songs). Given that it is Lucinha's narrative that has dominated much of the historical memory of Cazuza, it is important to acknowledge that her tale is colored by deeply personal recollections of and love for Cazuza, which has likely caused bias beyond the ordinary measure of many historical accounts. It is, however, to Lucinha's credit that the book does not shy away from difficult topics. In fact, Lucinha explicitly speaks of homosexuality in Cazuza's life and is highly critical of the destructive behavior that marked how he likely contracted HIV.¹⁷³ For these reasons and with these considerations taken into account, *Só as mães são felizes* will offer the bulk of the biographical material on Cazuza for this chapter.

Lucinha describes Cazuza as an impossibly rowdy, irascible, spoiled, and misbehaved child, yet one who was also passionate and loving, a rabble-rouser who charmed his way through life. Cazuza resisted any imposition of authority and quickly turned to drugs and sex in

¹⁷¹ A melodic and jazzy, yet slightly nostalgic, musical style that evolved from *samba*, *bossa nova* became so globally popular (Tom Jobim's "The Girl from Ipanema" is the most lasting example) that it would be linked with Brazil for many years to come. As explained in Chapter One, MPB is an umbrella term that encompasses many different kinds of Brazilian music, including *Tropicália*.

¹⁷² According to Jacqueline Cantore, Caetano Veloso and Cazuza were dating for a while, and it was Veloso who introduced Cazuza to the music world. One excellent example of this collaboration occurred after Cazuza and his bandmate Roberto Frejat scripted the song "*Todo amor que houver nessa vida*" ("All the love there is in this life") (Cazuza and Roberto Frejat, "*Todo amor que houver nessa vida*," *Barão Vermelho*, Som Livre, 1982). After doing so, Caetano Veloso began singing the song at concerts and even went on to record a cover of it, which created a great deal of publicity for Cazuza and his band. See Caetano Veloso, "*Todo amor que houver nessa vida*," *Totalmente Demais*, Universal Int'l, 1986. Jacqueline Cantore, Interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

¹⁷³ See, for example, Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 1997), 108, 128-9.

adolescence. Like many children born to parents of wealth and prestige, it seems as though Cazuzza walked a fine line between simultaneously rejecting his parents' "square" lifestyle and relying on them for his constant support and upkeep. Lucinha paints Cazuzza's adolescence as a series of misadventures in drunkenness and underage driving, while she and João often came to his rescue.¹⁷⁴ Cazuzza barely finished high school and dropped out of college after only three weeks, finally winding up at his father's company, *Som Livre*, where he slowly began to establish himself in this preeminent bastion for musical creativity and production. It was at *Som Livre* that Cazuzza met Ezequiel Neves, a journalist and producer who would become a lifelong friend and advocate. Neves encouraged Cazuzza's creativity and became a source of comfort through the long years of Cazuzza's illness.

Cazuzza, however, would or could not keep his frenetic lifestyle and wanderlust in check and loathed to rely on his father for employment. After his brief stint at *Som Livre*, he abruptly moved to San Francisco in 1979. João and Lucinha once again paid his way. He studied photography in a course at the University of California-Berkeley and developed a strong sensibility for beat poetry. San Francisco at the time was already a magnet for gay men around the world (yet at that point still a year or so away from being affected by AIDS), but whether that was a specific draw for Cazuzza is unclear. Whatever transpired there, Cazuzza never finished his photography course. He returned to Brazil and suddenly, having floundered for so long, found his calling in music.¹⁷⁵

When Cazuzza returned to Rio de Janeiro he joined two theater troupes. During one of the groups' performances Cazuzza began to sing, stunning the crowd with his talent. A friend introduced him to a start-up garage band called *Barão Vermelho* ("The Red Baron") on the other

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 110-111.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 121-126.

side of town. Bandmates Maurício Carvalho de Barros, Flávio Augusto “Guto” Goffi Marquesini, Roberto Frejat, and André “Dé” Palmeira Cunha clicked with him immediately. *Barão* played in all of Rio’s major venues and secured a record deal early in its existence. *Barão Vermelho*’s self-titled first LP in 1982, of which Cazuza was a major lyricist, situated them firmly in Brazil’s hippest music scene. Brazilian music megastar and tropicalist Caetano Veloso lauded the band and called Cazuza “the greatest poet of his generation.”¹⁷⁶ This comment alone might have been enough to launch the band to permanent fame as one of the most important rock bands of the 1980s.

Cazuza became iconic of his generation from early on, a beloved celebrity who lived a life of luxury but responded with humility to his fans. Jacqueline Cantore, a close friend of Caio Fernando Abreu’s who met Cazuza on several occasions explained, “You would see Cazuza every night at the bars [in Rio’s glitziest neighborhood,] Leblon. You could talk to him, he was very approachable...he was very well-raised and well-mannered and educated and funny and cute and very seductive...He was a party boy....at night. And during the day, you knew where to find him: at the beach.”¹⁷⁷

Often, however, it was Cazuza’s wild side that created trouble. As *Barão* continued its electric productions, something in the chemistry of the group faltered. In the 2005 biopic of Cazuza’s life, *Cazuza: o tempo não pára* (“Cazuza: Time Doesn’t Stop,” named after one of Cazuza’s most famous hit songs and based on Lucinha Araujo’s book), the reasons offered for *Barão*’s disintegration point mainly at Cazuza. Awash in fame and wealth, Cazuza began to drink through rehearsals and use drugs copiously.¹⁷⁸ He was erratic, irritable, and chronically late

¹⁷⁶ “O melhor poeta de sua geração.” Ibid., 165. My translation.

¹⁷⁷ Jacqueline Cantore, Interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

¹⁷⁸ *Cazuza o tempo não pára*, DVD, produced by Sandra Werneck, et al. (2005; Brazil: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment).

for appointments. Onstage, Cazuzza cursed at his audience.¹⁷⁹ His bandmates grew increasingly frustrated with Cazuzza's careless and reckless behavior; Cazuzza grew increasingly frustrated with what he deemed as *Barão*'s limited artistic vision. Cazuzza wanted to produce a different kind of music, something that would eclipse the garage music sound on which *Barão* had gained and staked its reputation.¹⁸⁰ The other band members of *Barão*, moreover, resented playing second fiddle to Cazuzza: headlines continually read, "Cazuzza and *Barão Vermelho*."¹⁸¹ The split was permanent. But in that same year, 1985, when Cazuzza began a solo career, the first glimpses of a dark, looming illness had already begun to present themselves.

Cazuzza and Negotiations of Sexuality

Cazuzza, a freshly-minted rock star, experimented as freely with his sexuality as he did with drugs. Even before Cazuzza had joined *Barão* and gained access to every kind of temptation, Lucinha recalls that when he was eighteen years old she became suspicious of Cazuzza's sexuality and sexual behavior. Snooping through Cazuzza's personal possessions, she discovered an "excessively affectionate" card to a male friend.¹⁸² When she asked him point-blank if he was gay, he answered,

Listen, Mom, I'm not one thing or another because nothing is definitive in life. You could say that I'm bisexual, because I haven't made my choice yet. One day I can like a man and the next, a woman. So don't worry about it.¹⁸³

"Bisexuality," or even "pansexuality," are complex terms that can imply a myriad of meanings. Here Cazuzza describes "bisexuality" as a liminal ground that serves as a buffer for

¹⁷⁹ Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes*, 188.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 165.

¹⁸¹ Ezequiel Neves, *Barão Vermelho: por que a gente é assim* (São Paulo: Globo, 2007), 97.

¹⁸² "Uma carta excessivamente carinhosa." Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes*, 107. My translation.

¹⁸³ "Olha, mamãe, eu não sou nem uma coisa, nem outra, porque nada é definitiva na vida. Você pode dizer que eu seja bisexual, porque não fiz minha escolha ainda. Um dia posso gostar de um homem como, no outro, gostar de uma mulher. Então, não fique preocupada com isso." *Ibid.*, 108. My translation.

someone like him, who had ostensibly not yet decided whether he was straight, gay, or neither.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, Cazuzza did have relationships with both men and women. Lucinha describes Cazuzza’s relationship with girlfriend Denise Dumont as a “fulminating passion,” while Cazuzza also had well-documented trysts with men, most notably with openly gay musician Ney Matogrosso.¹⁸⁵ The movie biopic *O Tempo Não Para* shows Cazuzza’s romance with another man, Serginho. Regardless of whether Serginho and Cazuzza’s relationship was fictionalized, the very presence of this storyline in the film highlights the degree to which homosexuality has been featured in connection with Cazuzza.¹⁸⁶ Cazuzza made easy references to kissing girls and having girlfriends, but he never denied his interest in men.¹⁸⁷ Yet, as hinted in the aforesaid passage, Cazuzza never ascribed to being gay per sé:

I don’t feel like a minority, I never have. I loathe the ghetto. I want to live in a different world, in which everyone lives equally. I would never be part of a ghetto!! I don’t like to hang out with just blacks, just Jews, just gays. I like to live with everyone together. I would feel badly waving a flag of a minority.¹⁸⁸

The idea of the “ghetto” that Cazuzza raises in this quotation requires some unpacking.

The word “ghetto” has taken on multiple connotations over time. Since the 1400s there were, for

¹⁸⁴ Jacqueline Cantore, however, maintains that Cazuzza’s image on the street was one of an openly gay man.

Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

¹⁸⁵ “Paixão fulminante.” Ibid., 128-129. My translation. Cazuzza’s union with Ney Matogrosso is noteworthy for two major reasons. First, Matogrosso would continue to be a presence in and advocate for Cazuzza’s musical career. Second, Matogrosso himself was a powerful voice in transforming homosexuality into a topic for public discourse. Androgynous and scandalous, Matogrosso’s record “*Secos & Molhados*” (“Dry & Wet”) of 1973 has been named a “gay manifesto” and the “first Brazilian LP to leave the closet” (“manifesto homossexual”; “o primeiro LP brasileiro de saída do armário.”) João S. Trevisán, *Devassos no paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*. (São Paulo: Editora Record, 2000), 289). My translation. The association of Cazuzza and Ney Matogrosso would have further strengthened Cazuzza’s reputation as a gay man.

¹⁸⁶ *Cazuzza o tempo não para*, DVD, produced by Sandra Werneck, et al., 2005.

¹⁸⁷ See, for example, Cazuzza, “*O tempo não para*,” *O Tempo não para*, Universal Music Group, 1989.

¹⁸⁸ “Não me sinto minoria, nunca me senti... Eu tenho horror a gueto. Quero viver num mundo diferente. Quero viver num mundo em que todo mundo conviva igual...Não faria parte de um gueto, nunca. Eu não gosto de andar só com preto, só com judeu, só com viado....Me sentiria muito mal em levantar bandeira de qualquer coisa que fosse muito específico, portanto não quero levantar bandeira de minorias.” Cazuzza, Lucinha Araujo and Regina Echeverria, *Preciso dizer que te amo: todas as letras do poeta* (São Paulo, Editora Globo: 2001), 75. My translation.

example, planned ghettos for Jews and other minority groups in Europe, made infamously prominent during the Nazi occupation of Europe in the 1940s. There are current ghettos (or neighborhoods or slums) comprised of minority groups that assemble not due to formal planning, but rather by economic, racial, and cultural patterns of migration in impoverished portions of cities worldwide; and there are tongue-in-cheek usages of the word “ghetto” to signify a place or neighborhood that is self-sustaining or isolated, though not in a deleterious way. Sociologist Louis Wirth offers a useful definition of the “ghetto”: “It may be regarded as a form of accommodation through which a minority has effectually been subordinated to a dominant group,” which has evolved in recent times to include minority groups of all kinds, both those that are advantaged and disadvantaged.¹⁸⁹

Yet Cazuzza’s usage of the word “ghetto” with regards to gay men seems not to correspond to any of these offered definitions.¹⁹⁰ Unlike in the United States, where the Castro in San Francisco or Greenwich Village in New York City were decidedly gay communities, there were no discretely gay neighborhoods in Rio or elsewhere in Brazil during Cazuzza’s time. Gay men were spread out in and among Brazil’s cities without any clear nexus. Thus, when Cazuzza expressed distaste for assigning Brazilian gay men to “the ghetto,” it seems to have been in an abstract way: what Cazuzza describes as a “ghetto” is the mentality that gay men belong together and should not or do not socialize with anyone else. Ghettoization for Cazuzza, therefore, is expressed as an attitude rather than as a concrete place. This attitude—that gay men live or belong in isolation—can nonetheless have applications in physical places, such as in gay

¹⁸⁹ Louis Wirth, “The Ghetto,” 57-71, in *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 33, no. 1, July 1927, 58. One example in which the word “ghetto” signifies an advantaged, or privileged, population is that of the “McGill Ghetto” of Montreal, Canada, the name of the upscale area where McGill University students reside.

¹⁹⁰ Cazuzza also mentions a preoccupation with the “ghetto” for Jews and blacks. While the same argument could be made for Jews or blacks—that the way Cazuzza describes their ghettoization does not correspond to any of my offered definitions of “ghettos”—it is a much more difficult case to make, given that there are undoubtedly areas in Brazil that had high concentrations of Jews and blacks in a way that did not exist for gay men.

nightclubs or bars.¹⁹¹ What is important to note in this discussion is that Cazuza did not wish to limit himself to any one minority group, which is crucial in two ways. The first is that Cazuza's aversion to pigeonholing himself into one social group or another resulted in his ability to produce music that reached out to a very diverse audience. The second key point builds on the first. Because Cazuza did not ascribe to the "ghetto" mentality, when he came to deal publicly with his seropositivity he would be able to defy the notion that AIDS was purely a gay man's disease; though he slept with men, he was not necessarily identified, by himself or others, as gay.

Cazuza's sexuality is, however, exceedingly complicated as it relates to his music, his diagnosis of HIV/AIDS in 1985, and his effect on the Brazilian public's perception of his persona. Although Cazuza never billed himself as explicitly gay or associated exclusively with gay people,¹⁹² there exists some general notion that Cazuza was a gay star.¹⁹³ One of Cazuza's most famous solo songs, "*Brasil*" ("Brazil"), for example, offers the refrain "*Brazil, mostra tua cara*" ("Brazil, show your face"). This demand, in the context of the "long *abertura*", is Cazuza's demand that Brazil be absolutely forthcoming and open ("*aberto*"), about everything from politics to sex.¹⁹⁴ If anything, Cazuza's bi- or pansexuality worked almost like a policy of inclusion: by choosing to have relationships with men and women, he did not confine himself to a kind of sexual "ghetto."

Going Solo: the First Glimpses of Disease

¹⁹¹ The word "ghetto," sometimes used synonymously with the word "*movimentação*" ("moving"), has been used informally in Brazil in the 1990s and beyond to denote a specifically-gay hangout. Interview with James N. Green, 11 December, 2008; Edward MacRae, *A construção da igualdade: identidade sexual e política no Brasil da "abertura"* (Campinas, SP: Editora da Unicamp, 1990), 50.

¹⁹² In fact, one of Cazuza's ideas for a song lyric when he was still part of *Barão Vermelho* was initially disputed because it had been suggestive of a gay joke. Cazuza, Lucinha Araujo, and Regina Echeverria, *Preciso dizer que te amo: todas as letras do poeta*, 90.

¹⁹³ See, for example, João S. Trevisán, *Devassos no paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*. (São Paulo: Editora Record, 2000), 319.

¹⁹⁴ Cazuza and Roberto Frejat, "*Brasil*," *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988.

Cazuza's solo career after his split from *Barão* was an immediate success. Cazuza's first solo album, *Exagerado* ("Exaggerated"), was launched in 1985 and perfectly encapsulates his personality at the time: in line with the album title, most of the songs on *Exagerado* are fast-paced, passionate love songs. Yet already by 1985 Cazuza's song lyrics were laced with glimpses of illness and politics. Although this chapter does not purport to examine all of Cazuza's song lyrics, it is nevertheless critical to unpack some of Cazuza's lyrics in order to better understand the social and personal contexts in which they were written. The song "*Mal Nenhum*" ("No Harm") claims, probably in reference to his drug and alcohol abuse, "I can't do any harm / Unless it's to myself."¹⁹⁵ Similarly in "*Desastre Mental*" ("Mental Disaster") Cazuza cries, "Baby, I'm sorry / But I don't have time / To feel your pains / My own I can no longer endure."¹⁹⁶ The song "*Balada de um vagabundo*" ("Ballad of a Vagabond") is highly complex and ripe with metaphors. Several lines of the song are especially noteworthy: "Take note of the crime, Mr. Judge / Stop, Mr. Judge / I ignore the street, the neighborhood, and the identity card / Don't ask me if I'm a carrier (*portador*) / Of number X on the identity card."¹⁹⁷

Although it is difficult to know of which crime Cazuza is guilty in this song, the context of his life offers the opportunity to hypothesize what he meant. The word "carrier" ("*portador*") that appears in the song is a common term for people in Brazil who are HIV-positive, or in other words, "carriers" of HIV/AIDS. While "*portador*" here could mean any number of things, the marriage of "*portador*" and "crime" is especially suggestive, given that a common perception of

¹⁹⁵ "Eu não posso causar mal nenhum / A não ser a mim mesmo." Cazuza., et al. "*Mal Nenhum*," *Exagerado*, Som Livre, 1985. My translation.

¹⁹⁶ "Baby, eu lamento / Mas não tenho tempo / Pra sentir as tuas dores / As minhas eu já não aguento." Cazuza., et al. "*Desastre Mental*," *Exagerado*, Som Livre, 1985. My translation.

¹⁹⁷ "Repare o crime senhor juiz / Pare senhor juiz / Ignoro a rua, o bairro e a carteira de identidade / Não me pergunte de ser portador / Do número xis do CIC." Cazuza., et al. "*Balada de um vagabundo*," *Exagerado*, Som Livre, 1985. My translation. It is likely, given their close personal relationship, that this song echoes Caetano Veloso's 1967 song "*Alegria, Alegria*" ("Happiness, Happiness"), which launched the *tropicália* movement of the 1960s and 70s. Like "*Alegria, Alegria*," "*Balada de um vagabundo*" references an identity card as a token of repression. See Caetano Veloso, "*Alegria, Alegria*," *A arte*, Polygram International, 1985.

HIV/AIDS in Brazil was that it was the punishment for the crime of errant sexual behavior, usually homosexuality. The notion that “*portador*” here refers to a PWA finds support in the fact that by 1985, the release date of the album, Cazuzza had already begun to suffer from high fevers and convulsions, common signs of opportunistic infections that ravage a body infected with HIV/AIDS. Cazuzza, who was aware that he was leading a risky lifestyle, asked a doctor for an HIV test, without any outside prompting, when hospitalized for what seemed to be mononucleosis.¹⁹⁸ Lucinha relates that Cazuzza expressed his fear that he was dying of AIDS to Ezequiel Neves, who in turn responded, “You’re so pretentious, Cazuzza. You don’t have AIDS because you’re not promiscuous!”¹⁹⁹

This episode is extremely revealing. First, it gives credence to the idea that Cazuzza had already begun to explore the theme of disease—specifically HIV/AIDS—in *Exagerado*, which was launched mere months after his hospital stay. Moreover, Neves’ comment to Cazuzza underscores many of the (mis)conceptions that Brazilians had about HIV/AIDS. It is important to remember that Cazuzza’s symptoms of HIV/AIDS manifested fairly early in the trajectory of the AIDS epidemic in Brazil. It is thus noteworthy that Neves immediately jumped to the conclusion that AIDS suggested errant or promiscuous sexual behavior for a variety of reasons. First, in Brazil in 1985 the stigma of HIV/AIDS was still so great that many people considered seropositivity a certain sign of moral corruption and promiscuity.²⁰⁰ Second, many people assumed themselves and others to be safe from HIV/AIDS if they didn’t engage in “corrupted” behavior and weren’t firmly nestled into a particular “risk group.” And since Cazuzza was not exclusively gay, he might have escaped that classification. Third, Neves jumped to the conclusion that AIDS suggested promiscuity because the Brazilian public had conceptualized

¹⁹⁸ Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes*, 191.

¹⁹⁹ “Você é muito pretencioso, Cazuzza. Você não está com aids porque não é promíscuo!” Ibid., 193.

²⁰⁰ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

AIDS as a disease spread by sex—notably gay sex,—yet, on the ground, intravenous drug use was also a major mode of HIV transmission.²⁰¹ Even though Cazuzza had undoubtedly experimented with intravenous drug use, the fact that no records exist of anyone drawing any kind of connection between his drug habits and suspected seropositivity signals the degree to which HIV/AIDS had become constructed in Brazil as a gay man’s disease.

Cazuzza’s first HIV test in 1985 came back a false negative.²⁰² For the time being, everyone around him thought that he was safe from the disease. The popular Brazilian magazine *Veja* (“Look”), however, had somehow captured a photo of Cazuzza during his stay at the hospital and had included the picture in an article that was entitled, “*A multiplicação do mal: a AIDS se espalha*” (“The proliferation of the disease: AIDS spreads”).²⁰³ The caption of the picture reads, “*Cazuzza: sem AIDS mas com boatos*” (“Cazuzza: AIDS-free but not rumor-free”), which accurately summed up the whisperings about Cazuzza’s health that were already circulating.²⁰⁴

Meanwhile, Cazuzza’s solo career was taking off. His shows packed the biggest venues in Rio de Janeiro; he was becoming established in Brazil’s metropolises as a musical wonder. Yet his frequent illnesses and infections lingered. It was not until April of 1987 that Cazuzza was accurately diagnosed with HIV, a radical revelation that would change and further politicize his music and his life.²⁰⁵

AIDS at Home and in the Studio

²⁰¹ According to the 2007 Epidemiological Report disseminated by Brazil’s Ministry of Health, between 1980 and 1995, about 45 percent of men aged 13-24 diagnosed with HIV/AIDS were intravenous drug users and were probably infected with HIV for this reason. *Boletim Epidemiológico AIDS/DST, anoIV No. 1*. (Brasília: Ministério da Saúde/Secretaria da Vigilância em Saúde/Programa Nacional de DST e AIDS, December 2007), 10.

²⁰² Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes*, 191.

²⁰³ “A multiplicação do mal: a AIDS se espalha,” *Veja*, April 14, 1985, 65. My translation.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.* My translation.

²⁰⁵ Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes*, 208.

Cazuza's music from the outset had been colored with melancholy and, as aforementioned in reference to "*Balada de um vagabundo*," traces of what could be construed as Cazuza's early struggle with the demons of HIV/AIDS. But after finally being diagnosed accurately with HIV/AIDS in 1987, Cazuza recorded *Ideologia* ("Ideology"), probably his most enduring and referenced album, one that is overtly political and marked with allusions to his disease in a much more explicit way than any of his earlier albums had been. Cazuza had scripted the lyrics for *Ideologia* while being treated for HIV in a hospital in Boston, which at the time offered the most advanced care available for PWAs. Cazuza would continue to shuttle between Rio de Janeiro and Boston over the course of his disease.²⁰⁶ By 1987, Cazuza's health was already rapidly deteriorating. He was painfully thin and had taken to wearing a bandanna around his head that masked the fact that he was losing hair. It would become his trademark look.²⁰⁷ Rumors flew about Cazuza's likely serostatus.²⁰⁸ The loud, fast-paced title song "*Ideologia*" ("Ideology") on his 1988 album paints in vivid colors his frustration and despair with the world he was living in, a world that was, just as he was, dying: "My heroes / died of overdoses / My enemies / are in power / Ideology / I want one to live by... / My pleasure / is now life-threatening / My sex and drugs / don't have any rock'n'roll."²⁰⁹

While it is apparent that "*Ideologia*" deals directly with the theme of Cazuza's serostatus—it is enough to note the last two lines cited above to see that AIDS had infiltrated his life—Cazuza's public allusions to his disease mirror other national ills discussed in Chapters One and Two. In 1988, the year of *Ideologia*'s release, José Sarney was still president of Brazil.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 217.

²⁰⁷ Guilherme Bryan, *Quem tem um sonho não dança: cultura jovem brasileira nos anos 80* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2004), 438.

²⁰⁸ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

²⁰⁹ "Meus heróis / Morreram de overdose / Meus inimigos / Estão no poder / Ideologia! / Eu quero uma pra viver... O meu prazer / Agora é risco de vida / Meu sex and drugs / Não tem nenhum rock'n'roll." Cazuza, et al., "*Ideologia*," *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988. My translation.

Sarney, who assumed the presidency upon Tancredo Neves' mysterious death, had actually supported the military dictatorship during its twenty-one years of rule in Brazil. Sarney, therefore, is undoubtedly one of the "enemies [who] are in power" that Cazuza cites in "*Ideologia*." In fact, in a testimonial by Cazuza compiled by Ezequiel Neves, Cazuza explicitly claimed that "*Ideologia*" was so bitter a song precisely because he had been so hopeful about Brazil's future in the days when Neves was to assume office, only to see all of his hopes dashed with Sarney's ascent to power. According to Cazuza, "We fought so hard and now what? Where did it get us? Which foot does our generation stand on?"²¹⁰ What Cazuza expressed was, in essence, the frustration of the "long *abertura*": Brazil had been promised re-democratization, but it was too slow to erase the vestiges of its military dictatorship past that still persisted in the country. In a *New York Times* article published on April 23, 1989, the author embarks on a review of the music of the 1980s under the sub-heading "New Wave of Disillusionment":

At the moment, in fact, the vision prevailing here [in Brazil] is about as far removed from the playful anarchy of tropicalismo [*tropicália*] as could be imagined. As the initial optimism following the end of the military dictatorship in 1985 has given way to the bitter reality of incompetent and corrupt civilian rule and a mushrooming foreign debt, Brazilian music has come to reflect that disillusionment. Freed from the bonds of censorship, new groups such as Urban Legion [*Legião Urbana*] sarcastically ask "What country is this?" and write jeremiads about Brazil's nuclear reactor program and the destruction of the Amazon.

The artist of the hour thus far has attracted virtually no foreign interest, perhaps because the power of his songs lies more in their lyrics than in their rock-influenced melodies. He is probably the angriest young man of all: the singer Cazuza, who is dying of AIDS and in one of his songs likens his guitar to "a machine gun full of resentment."²¹¹

²¹⁰ "Cazuza by Cazuza," compiled by Ezequiel Neves from interviews between 1983 and 1989 in *IstoÉ*, *Playboy*, *Amiga*, and *Interview*. http://www.cazuza.com.br/sec_textos_list.php?language=en (3 November 2008).

²¹¹ Larry Rohter, "Brazilian Pop Uneasy in the Spotlight," *The New York Times*, April 23, 1989, Section 2, Page 1s. According to Jacqueline Cantore, Cazuza's anger may have stemmed from another place as well: the drug AZT (azidothymidine, a popular antiretroviral drug for HIV/AIDS) he was taking to curb the effects of HIV/AIDS caused him to become very aggressive. Cantore describes Cazuza as having been a "verbal machine gun" (*metralhadora*

What is particularly noteworthy in this quotation is how the author underlines the stark difference between the music of the dictatorship (*Tropicália*) and the music of *abertura* (the music of Cazuza and his contemporaries). Whereas during the dictatorship musicians such as Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil had play with their lyrics to avoid censorship, Cazuza and his contemporaries did not need to dissemble the outrage they felt at having been cheated out of the promise of re-democratization.

Indeed, as the author of the above paragraph attests, “*Ideologia*” is but one of the many songs that Cazuza would produce to express such outrage. Another such song, also one of Cazuza’s most famous, is “*Brasil*” (“Brazil”), of which the chorus, delivered in screams, demands: “Brazil! / Show your face / I want to see who pays / For us to be like this / Brazil! / What’s your business? / The name of your partner? / Trust me...”²¹² “*Brasil*,” already an angry song exemplifying Brazilians’ disillusionment with a whole host of social problems, saw further politicization when Cazuza spat on the Brazilian flag at a concert in Rio de Janeiro on October 18, 1988, while singing this song.²¹³ Although Cazuza attributed his behavior onstage partially to a deep depression and hallucinations, the anger that he displayed is especially significant when contrasted with a concert that Cazuza and *Barão Vermelho* had put on years earlier, in January of 1985.²¹⁴ After the release of *Barão Vermelho*’s album *Barão Vermelho 2* (recorded by Ney Matogrosso), *Barão* put on a show in Rio de Janeiro during which they dedicated their song “*Pro dia nascer feliz*” (“For the day to be born happy”) to Brazil, even changing the lyric to “For

verbal) of insults towards the end of his life. Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

²¹² “Brasil! / Mostra tua cara / Quero ver quem paga / Pra gente ficar assim / Brasil! / Qual é o teu negócio? / O nome do teu sócio? / Confia em mim...” Cazuza, “Brasil,” *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988. My translation.

²¹³ Guilherme Bryan, *Quem tem um sonho não dança: cultura jovem brasileira nos anos 80* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2004), 438. It is possible that “*Brasil*,” produced in 1988, was in dialogue with the ideas communicated by Renato Russo’s song “*Que país é este?*,” produced a year earlier.

²¹⁴ José Carlos Camargo, “Cazuza tem virus da Aids mas diz estar com ‘saúde ótima,’” *Folha de São Paulo*, February 13, 1989.

Brazil to be born happy” (“*Pro Brasil nascer feliz*”). Cazuzza’s bandmate Roberto Frejat recalled how Cazuzza—in stark contrast to spitting on the Brazilian flag three years later—wrapped himself in the Brazilian flag to symbolize his hopefulness about the prospect of Tancredo Neves’ assuming office:

It was a very important moment even for the history of rock in Brazil. It was very striking, because the campaign for direct elections [*Diretas já*] was a show, in truth, political. At the moment that that was aborted, anyway, Tancredo [Neves] still was the voice of mediation, dialogue, which is to say that we knew from then on that everything would get better.²¹⁵

When Tancredo Neves died, Brazilians took to the streets in anger. According to Jacqueline Cantore, “there were a million people on the streets on Avenida Brasil in Rio, and you needed to have a song to sing. And there were a few songs that became icons.”²¹⁶ Cazuzza’s “*Brasil*” was one of them. Even though it is apparent that Cazuzza’s music had political leanings from the outset, after Cazuzza’s diagnosis his music tackled social ills, specifically AIDS and death, in greater depth. One such example is Cazuzza’s song “*Boas Novas*” (“Good News”), in which he sings, “Ladies and gentleman / I bring good news / I saw the face of death / And it’s alive.”²¹⁷ All his albums thereafter followed this same trajectory, particularly *O Tempo não pára* (“Time Doesn’t Stop), recorded in 1988 and launched in 1989. Its most famous song, the title song “*O Tempo não pára*,” reveals very telling details about Cazuzza’s struggle with HIV/AIDS.

²¹⁵ “Foi um momento muito importante até para a história do rock no Brasil. Foi muito marcante, porque a campanha pelas eleições diretas era um show, na verdade, político. No momento em que aquilo foi abortado, de qualquer jeito, o Tancredo ainda era a voz da mediação, do diálogo, ou seja, sabíamos que, dali em diante, as coisas melhorariam.” Guilherme Bryan, *Quem tem um sonho não dança: cultura jovem brasileira nos anos 80*, 262. My translation.

²¹⁶ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

²¹⁷ “Senhoras e senhores / Trago boas novas / Eu vi a cara da morte / E ela estava viva.” Cazuzza, “Boas Novas,” *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988. My translation. Author João Silvério Trevisán posits that the high doses of AZT (azidothymidine, a popular antiretroviral drug for HIV/AIDS) that Cazuzza was taking at the end of his life caused him to hallucinate, which suggests that Cazuzza might have actually thought that he had quite literally seen the face of death. João S. Trevisán, *Devassos no paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*, 320. Cazuzza, himself, noted that he had suffered from hallucinations. See José Carlos Camargo, “Cazuzza tem vírus da Aids mas diz estar com ‘saúde ótima,’” *Folha de São Paulo*, February 13, 1989.

Because this song is one of the most enduring works of Cazuzá's and because it is the namesake of the biopic produced about Cazuzá's life, it is worth translating key parts of the song to understand Cazuzá's public fight with HIV/AIDS.

I shoot against the sun
I'm strong, I am by chance
My machine gun full of injuries
I'm a guy
Tired of running
In the opposite direction
Without an arrival podium or a kiss from a girlfriend
I'm just one more guy

But if you think
That I am defeated
Know that I am still rolling the dice
Because time, time doesn't stop

Some days yes, some days no
I continue surviving without a scratch
From the charity of those who detest me

Your pool is full of rats
Your ideas don't correspond with facts
Time doesn't stop...

In cold nights it's better not to be born
In hot ones, choose: it's kill or die
And this is how we become Brazilian
They call you a thief, a fairy, a stoner
They transform the whole country into a whorehouse
Because that's how we make more money²¹⁸

This song is clearly marked by anger, about his disease, questions about his sexuality, and AIDS's implications on his personal and love life ("Without an arrival podium or a kiss from

²¹⁸ "Disparo contra o sol / Sou forte, sou por acaso / Minha metralhadora cheia de mágoas / Eu sou um cara / Cansado de correr / Na direção contrária / Sem pódio de chegada ou beijo de namorada / Eu sou mais um cara // Mas se você achar / Que eu tô derrotado / Saiba que ainda estou rolando os dados / Porque o tempo, o tempo não pára // Dias sim, dias não / Eu vou sobrevivendo sem um arranhão / Da caridade de quem me detesta // A tua piscina tá cheia de ratos / Tuas idéias não correspondem aos fatos / O tempo não pára... // Nas noites de frio é melhor nem nascer / Nas de calor, se escolhe: é matar ou morrer / E assim nos tornamos brasileiros / Te chamam de ladrão, de bicha, maconheiro / Transformam o país inteiro num puteiro / Pois assim se ganha mais dinheiro." Cazuzá, et al. "O Tempo não pára," *O Tempo não pára*, Universal Music Group, 1989. My translation.

a girlfriend” / “They call you a thief, a fairy, a stoner”) and about the fate of Brazil, critiquing especially the greed of the elite classes (“Your pool is full of rats” / “It’s kill or die / And this is how we become Brazilian / They transform the whole country into a whorehouse / Because that’s how we make more money”). But the song is also hopeful, publicly attesting to the fact that Cazuzza would continue fighting for his life because nothing would stop for his disease. Although there are forces out there working for him despite their hatred (“the charity of those who detest me”), he knows that he has supporters. It is noteworthy that his popularity soared.²¹⁹ In fact, writer Luiz André Correia Lima argues that Cazuzza’s work began to get more notice precisely because of the “wide divulgation that he was seropositive, contaminated with HIV. With the news that AIDS was killing him slowly, people began to pay more attention to the content of his songs, maybe because they were morbid and because of the sensationalism that surrounded his public admission.”²²⁰

While this claim may be true, Cazuzza did not publicly admit to being HIV-positive until February 13, 1989, in a famous interview with reporter José Carlos “Zeca” Camargo. Camargo, who had been stationed in New York City for São Paulo’s leading newspaper, *Folha de São Paulo*, reported Cazuzza’s condition after one of Cazuzza’s hospitalizations in Boston. In it, Cazuzza claimed to have been in excellent health and expected to live until age 70, but he admitted to severe health problems and side effects to the drugs he was taking at the time, such as depression and hallucinations.²²¹ The story repeated some of the tropes that had always marked publicity about Cazuzza: he described himself as bisexual, asserted that he had used

²¹⁹ “Parentes e amigos enterram Cazuzza ao som de um ‘blues,’” *Jornal do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro, July 8, 1990, 14-15.

²²⁰ “...a divulgação ampla de que seria soropositivo, contaminado com o HIV. Com a notícia de que a AIDS estava matando-o aos poucos, as pessoas passaram a prestar mais atenção ao conteúdo de sua obra, talvez mais pela morbidez e pelo sensacionalismo da moléstia fatal exposta publicamente.” Luiz André Correia Lima, *Cazuzza: lenda e legenda dos anos 80* (Londrina: Editora UEL, 1997), 26. My translation.

²²¹ José Carlos Camargo, “Cazuzza tem virus da Aids mas diz estar com ‘saúde ótima,’” *Folha de São Paulo*, February 13, 1989.

drugs, and praised his family for being strong. Yet the article also introduced the angry front that had marked Cazuzza's recent music. Recalling the concert in Rio de Janeiro on October 18, 1988, in which he spat on the Brazilian flag, Cazuzza said,

Everyone who was watching me there [at the concert] was there because they loved me. But I also wanted some of them to hate me. I don't want the whole world to be nice to me. So I started to do things onstage to intentionally bother people...I don't think I like this idea [of being an idol]. I want to be a Caetano Veloso, you know, who can go out on the street, walk around, be loved by some and hated by others.²²²

The story made the front page.²²³

Cazuzza's Disease and its Treatment in the Media

Zeca Camargo's front-page article on Cazuzza's seropositivity sparked an incredible deluge of media coverage. Cazuzza, who admitted to being HIV-positive in part because he had demanded honesty from everyone else in his music, claimed, "I sing a song that says, 'Brazil, show your face.' If I don't show mine, I won't be consistent with myself."²²⁴ Just as important, Cazuzza wanted to serve as a model for other PWAs, claiming that, "I say that I have AIDS because I want to show these people that they must not despair. I have AIDS, and I continue working, producing, composing."²²⁵ Cazuzza's public admission of seropositivity had not,

²²² "Todo mundo que estava me assistindo estava lá porque me amava. Mas eu queria que algumas pessoas também me odiassem. Eu não queria que todo mundo fosse bonzinho comigo. Então eu comecei a fazer coisas no palco para incomodar propositalmente as pessoas....Acho que não gosto dessa idéia. Eu quero ser um Caetano Veloso, entende, que pode sair na rua, passear, ser amado por uns e odiado por outros." Ibid.

²²³ Miguel Arcaño Prado, "Se estivesse vivo, Cazuzza completaria 50 anos nesta sexta-feira," *Folha de São Paulo Online*, April 4, 2008. <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/ilustrada/ult90u389208.shtml> 3 November 2008.

²²⁴ "Eu canto uma música que diz 'Brasil, mostra tua cara', explicou o cantor a seus pais. 'Se eu não mostrar a minha, não estarei sendo coerente comigo mesmo.'" Ricardo Alexandre, *Dias de luta: o rock e o Brasil dos anos 80* (Brasil: DBA, 2002), 299. My translation.

²²⁵ "Eu falo que estou com AIDS porque quero mostrar pra essas pessoas que não devem se desesperar. Eu tenho AIDS e continuo trabalhando, produzindo, compondo." Ana Galo and Marilda Varejão, "O Drama (e o Desabafo) de Cazuzza," *Manchete*, May 13, 1989, 8. My translation.

however, been as simple for him as he may have portrayed to the media. In fact, his admission had been a stark turnaround from the year before. At the end of 1988, journalist Marília Gabriela had asked Cazuzza if he were HIV-positive, expressing the rumors that had been circulating since the days of his first hospitalization in Rio de Janeiro. Cazuzza denied the allegation, claiming that his thinning hair—a common effect of treatments for HIV—was due to old age.²²⁶ He was thirty years old at the time. Cazuzza’s reasons for having denied his seropositivity were understandable: the prejudice and stigmatization of PWAs was extremely pronounced in 1988.²²⁷ In fact, it was Cazuzza himself who would come to change that paradigm of blame and guilt. Cazuzza’s openness came with a high price, however: not only did the media bombard him with interview requests, but Cazuzza became the subject of a morbid fascination that at times even eclipsed the attention paid to his music. In practical terms, moreover, when the American Consulate learned that he was HIV-positive, Cazuzza was unable to obtain a visa to go to the United States for medical treatment for eight months.²²⁸

²²⁶ Ibid. There are reports, however, that Cazuzza made pointed remarks about AIDS during a 1988 tour through the Northeast of Brazil before he admitted publicly to being HIV-positive. See Angela Abreu and Alessandro Porro, “Cazuzza: uma vítima da AIDS agoniza em praça pública,” *Veja*, April 26, 1989, 84. It is noteworthy also that Cazuzza attributes his admission to seropositivity in large part to Gabriela’s urging in this interview. José Carlos Camargo, “Cazuzza tem vírus da Aids mas diz estar com ‘saúde ótima,’” *Folha de São Paulo*, February 13, 1989.

²²⁷ Cazuzza did, however, tell friends and family that he was HIV-positive far before he admitted it to the media, even confiding in Ezequiel Neves three days after his diagnosis. Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes*, 209.

²²⁸ Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes*, 266.

Author Antônio Fausto Neto lists 29 articles between 1989 and 1990 that were published in various Brazilian newspapers and magazines, all of which constructed Cazuzza’s life around his “case” of AIDS with a notable dearth or lack of focus on his musical productions and



Cazuzza on the cover of *Veja* magazine, April 26, 1989. Source: *Veja* magazine

career.²²⁹ Many more articles were published than even these 29 cited. The most important—and most egregious—is the April 26, 1989, article published in *Veja* (“Look”), one of Brazil’s leading magazines and the very same one that had reported Cazuzza’s hospitalization years earlier. Cazuzza appears on the cover of *Veja* emaciated, hugging himself, with glasses and cropped hair. As striking as the cover photo is the title of the article: “*Cazuzza: Uma vítima da Aids agoniza em praça pública*” (“Cazuzza: a victim of AIDS agonizes in a public arena”).²³⁰ The first noteworthy

element of the title to highlight is that *Veja* employed the words “victim” and “agonize” when describing Cazuzza, words that both denote and connote Cazuzza’s submission to AIDS. It is useful to recall here that Herbert Daniel and his compatriots rejected precisely this kind of language of victimization, claiming that the phrases “dying of AIDS” (as opposed to “living with AIDS”) and “victim of AIDS” (as opposed to “person with AIDS”) stripped PWAs of any

²²⁹ Antônio Fausto Neto, *Mortes em derrapagem: os casos Corona e Cazuzza: no discurso da comunicação de massa*. (Rio de Janeiro: Rio Fundo Editora, 1991), 122-123. In a quote from 1989 from then-director and editor of *Amiga* magazine (similar to *TV Guide* in the United States) Eli Haulfon said, “If Cazuzza stays alive one more year, he will have the record for the greatest number of *Amiga* covers. Even today, if I put Cazuzza on the cover, we have guaranteed sales.” (“Se o Cazuzza ficar vivo mais um ano, vai bater o recorde de capas de *Amiga*. Até hoje, se eu coloco o Cazuzza na capa tenho venda garantida.”) This quote, even more than attesting to the volume of literature on Cazuzza’s struggle with AIDS, exemplifies how the disease had been exploited in the media. Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos: autobiografias & AIDS* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, 2002), 158. My translation.

²³⁰ Angela Abreu and Alessandro Porro, “Cazuzza: uma vítima da AIDS agoniza em praça pública,” *Veja*, April 26, 1989, 80-87.

humanity and content irrespective of their disease. This is particularly striking in light of Cazuzza's position as a national celebrity and hero. The second noteworthy element of the title is that Cazuzza is allegedly agonizing in a public space, which purports to shift Cazuzza's fight against AIDS from the private to public sphere.

Indeed, the *Veja* article claims that Cazuzza "makes a point of *dying* in public" despite the fact that Cazuzza declared, "my doctor says that I'm a miracle because I have so much energy, such a great desire to create, that this is what keeps me alive. My head is very good, it commands everything."²³¹ Cazuzza, indeed, continued life as normal after his diagnosis, drinking and smoking and continuing to produce music. He did not want people to pity his condition.²³² Perhaps *Veja's* interest in designating Cazuzza's death as imminent and his disease as all-encompassing, therefore, stems from the fact that he divulged to the reporters, now famously, "I was always very destructive, I thought I had AIDS, I wanted to have AIDS."²³³ It is unclear exactly what Cazuzza meant by this comment, other than that his destructive behavior clearly precipitated his seropositivity, yet he did nothing to stop it. Whether this comment suggests that Cazuzza actively sought to become infected is unclear.²³⁴

²³¹ "...faz questão de morrer em público," "Meu médico diz que eu sou um milagre porque eu tenho tanta energia, tanta vontade de criar, e que é isso que me deixa vivo. Minha cabeça está muito boa, ela comanda tudo," Ibid., 80. Emphasis added. My translation. It is noteworthy that Cazuzza mentioned that his "head is very good," since HIV/AIDS often crosses the blood-brain barrier and can cause a host of neurological diseases, which include among them blindness, nausea, vomiting, and dementia.

²³² Angela Abreu and Alessandro Porro, "Cazuzza: uma vítima da AIDS agoniza em praça pública," *Veja*, April 26, 1989, 87.

²³³ "Sempre fui muito destrutivo, eu achei que tinha Aids, eu quis ter Aids." Ibid., 83. My translation.

²³⁴ This theory, though highly unlikely in this scenario, is certainly not unheard of. There is currently a trend among gay men, particularly in the United States, called "bug chasing," which is the willful contraction of HIV/AIDS. "Bug chasing," however, was certainly not a documented phenomenon in the early phases of the AIDS pandemic, when death was inevitable and imminent, nor is there literature dealing with the presence of this trend in Brazil. It is nonetheless worth noting. See, for example, DeAnn Gauthier and Craig J. Forsyth, "Bareback Sex, Bug Chasers, and the Gift of Death" in *Sexual Deviance*, ed. Christopher Hensley and Richard Tewksbury (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 11-25; *The Gift*. DVD. Directed by Louise Hogarth. 2002; U.S.: Dream Out Loud Productions, 2002; and Jesse Green, "Flirting with Suicide." *New York Times*, September 15, 1996. Lexis-Nexis Academic.

The general thrust of the *Veja* article seems incompatible with the suggestion of its title, that Cazuzza is “agonizing” in public. Cazuzza’s public admission was not one of agony. On the contrary, his admission offered a model of courage for other people to admit their seropositivity and to deal with a diagnosis of AIDS bravely.²³⁵ In Jane Galvão’s critical chronology of HIV/AIDS’ trajectory in Brazil, Cazuzza is named as but one of a handful of public figures whose deaths from HIV/AIDS were watershed moments.²³⁶ Moreover, Cazuzza’s public admission countered other people’s public denials of HIV/AIDS, most notably that of celebrity Lauro Corona. Lauro Corona was a soap opera star who, in 1989, was one of the first Brazilian celebrities to die of complications due to AIDS, which he allegedly contracted from a blood transfusion.²³⁷ Corona denied his seropositivity until his death, and was roundly condemned by the media for his cowardice in not admitting to being HIV-positive.²³⁸ In the very same *Veja* article, Cazuzza actually indicts Corona as being HIV-positive.²³⁹

Yet the final paragraphs of the *Veja* article clarify that the aim of the article all along had been to situate Cazuzza publicly as a “victim” of AIDS rather than as a successful artist or role model to fellow Brazilians. In its concluding sentences, the authors of the *Veja* article write, “Cazuzza is not a musical genius. It is even arguable whether his work will endure, from how of-the-moment (*colada*) it is...[Cazuzza] is a great artist, a man full of positive attributes and defects

²³⁵ See, for example, João S. Trevisán, *Devassos no paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*, 319; Caio Fernando Abreu and Italo Moriconi, *Cartas* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, 2002), 311-313.

²³⁶ Jane Galvão, *1980-2001: uma cronologia da epidemia de HIV/AIDS no Brasil e no mundo* (Rio de Janeiro: Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS, 2002), 12.

²³⁷ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

²³⁸ Antônio Fausto Neto, *Mortes em derrapagem: os casos Corona e Cazuzza: no discurso da comunicação de massa*. (Rio de Janeiro: Rio Fundo Editora, 1991), 122-123. Corona’s treatment in the media is not unlike that of Freddie Mercury from the British band Queen.

²³⁹ Angela Abreu and Alessandro Porro, “Cazuzza: uma vítima da AIDS agoniza em praça pública,” *Veja*, April 26, 1989, 85.

who has the greatness to show them off in a public space to arrive at some kind of truth.”²⁴⁰ In denying the greatness of Cazuza’s music—and here it is worthwhile to recall that Caetano Veloso called him the best poet of his generation—and focusing instead on his public battle with his disease, the *Veja* article stripped him of his identity and firmly placed him in the category of someone “dying from AIDS” rather than “living [bravely] with AIDS.” As Lucinha Araujo mentions with regards to the discussion of his musical capabilities, in a short eight years of a musical career Cazuza’s repertoire included 126 songs recorded, 34 of his songs recorded by other artists, and 60 unedited songs.²⁴¹

Lucinha Araujo’s narration of the *Veja* story fumes with anger. Claiming that the front-page photograph of Cazuza portrayed him as much sicker than he actually was, *Veja* “sentenced the death of [Cazuza] without any constraints.”²⁴² She recalls that people sent messages of solidarity to the Araujo family, agreeing that the article had been damning. Cazuza, himself, wrote an opinion piece entitled, “*Veja*, a Agonia de uma Revista” (“*Veja*, the agony of a magazine”) that circulated first in the April 26, 1989 edition of the newspaper *Jornal do Brasil*. In it he wrote,

A reading of the edition of *Veja* with my portrait on the front cover produces in me—and I believe in every person who is sensitive and endowed with a minimum of a spirit of solidarity—a deep feeling of sadness and revulsion.

Sadness in seeing this magazine give into the temptation of descending into sensationalism, to sentence me to death in exchange for selling a few more copies. If your reporters and editors had determined beforehand that I’m in agony, they should have, if nothing else, have had the loyalty and frankness to have told me, when they were received cordially in my house.

²⁴⁰ “Cazuza não é um gênio da música. É até discutível se sua obra irá perdurar, de tão colada que está ao momento presente... É um grande artista, um homem cheio de qualidades e defeitos que tem a grandeza de alardeá-los em praça pública para chegar a algum tipo de verdade.” Angela Abreu and Alessandro Porro, “Cazuza: uma vítima da AIDS agoniza em praça pública,” *Veja*, April 26, 1989, 87. My translation.

²⁴¹ Lucinha Araujo, *Só as mães são felizes*, 280.

²⁴² “*Veja* sentenciou a morte de meu filho sem qualquer constrangimento.” *Ibid.*, 280. My translation.

Even though I am not a journalist, I understand that the affirmation that I am agonizing (*agonizante*) should have been confirmed by pronouncements from the doctors who assist me, the only ones, as I understand it, with knowledge of my clinical condition and, therefore, able to opine in that regard. *Veja* did not fulfill this obligation and, with arrogance, played the role of judge in my destiny. This is the reason for my revulsion.

I'm not in agony, I'm not dying. I could die at any moment, like any other living person. After all, who knows with certainty how much longer it will last?

But I'm very much alive (*vivíssimo*) in my fight, in my work, in my love for those who are beloved to me, in my music—and, certainly, in front of everyone who likes me.

Cazuza²⁴³

Writer Antônio Fausto Neto argues that the media had difficulty in categorizing Cazuza's relationship to his disease, especially after the public outrage at the *Veja* article: the press alternately treated his struggle with AIDS as a show for an audience to watch, as a struggle, as an agony, and as a victory.²⁴⁴ In reaction to the *Veja* article, *Jornal do Brasil* published on April 30, 1989 an article that publicly indicted *Veja*, claiming, “*Veja* wants us to see Cazuza as a victim; his courage, generosity, poetry, and all the lively forces (*forças vivas*) in Brazil recognize him as *a hero of our times*.”²⁴⁵ Thus what the *Veja* article ended up accomplishing, ironically enough, was that Brazilian media and audiences had to re-evaluate how they understood AIDS: because

²⁴³ “A leitura da edição da *Veja*, que traz meu retrato na capa produz em mim—e acredito que em todas as pessoas sensíveis e dotadas de um mínimo de espírito de solidariedade—um profundo sentimento de tristeza e revolta.

Tristeza por ver essa revista ceder à tentação de descer ao sensacionalismo, para me sentenciar à morte em troca da venda de alguns exemplares a mais. Se os repórteres e editores tinham de antemão determinado que estou em agonia, deviam, quando nada, ter tido a lealdade e a franqueza de o anunciar para mim mesmo, quando foram recebidos cordialmente em minha casa.

Mesmo não sendo jornalista, entendo que a afirmação de que sou um agonizante devia estar fundamentada em declaração dos médicos que me assistem, únicos, segundo entendo, a conhecerem meu estado clínico e, portanto, em condições de se manifestarem a respeito. A VEJA não cumpriu esse dever e, com arrogância, assume o papel de juiz do meu destino. Esta é a razão de minha revolta.

Não estou em agonia, não estou morrendo. Posso morrer a qualquer momento, como qualquer pessoa viva. Afinal, quem sabe com certeza quanto vai durar?

Mas estou *vivíssimo* na minha luta, no meu trabalho, no meu amor pelos meus entes queridos, na minha música—e certamente perante todos os que gostam de mim.

Cazuza.” *Ibid.*, 284. My translation.

²⁴⁴ Antônio Fausto Neto, *Mortes em derrapagem: os casos Corona e Cazuza no discurso da comunicação de massa*. (Rio de Janeiro: Rio Fundo Editora, 1991), 132.

²⁴⁵ ““A revista *Veja* quer que se veja Cazuza como uma vítima; por sua coragem, por sua generosidade, por sua poesia, todas as forças vivas do Brasil reconhecem nele um *herói do nosso tempo*.”” *Ibid.*, 141. My translation.

the *Veja* article was so despicable, the backlash that resulted from its publication created a groundswell of sympathy for Cazuzza and other PWAs alike. Suddenly, the acceptable reaction to AIDS after the *Veja* article was not repudiation, but rather, understanding and discussion.

This general tenor persisted indefinitely in the media, as well evidenced by a post-mortem video retrospective on Cazuzza's work entitled, *Tributo a Cazuzza* ("Tribute to Cazuzza").²⁴⁶ In between taped performances of Cazuzza's music, contemporaries spoke of Cazuzza's legacy, aptly linking his art and his disease. Echoing Caetano Veloso's lauds, *Barão Vermelho* bandmate Frejat claimed, "Cazuzza is perhaps the person who best expressed his generation's way of speaking and expressing [itself.]" Producer and ex-lover Ney Matogrosso said, "I think that the fact that he got sick might have favored...[his] clarity and...objectivity." The consensus these stars share is that Cazuzza offered something to everyone.²⁴⁷ Charismatic and loving, Cazuzza appealed to people from all walks of life.²⁴⁸ His admission of seropositivity was as groundbreaking as it was largely because of the respect and adoration Cazuzza had garnered over the years.²⁴⁹

Cazuzza's Legacy and Influence on AIDS Discourse in Brazil

Although Cazuzza weathered difficult times after his admission of seropositivity, notably with regards to the article about him in *Veja* magazine, his position as an openly HIV-positive

²⁴⁶ The debacle over the *Veja* article, moreover, called into question how the press treated and would treat a topic as sensitive as AIDS. See, for example, Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos: autobiografias & AIDS*, 69.

²⁴⁷ "Talvez [Cazuzza] seja a pessoa que represente melhor uma maneira de uma geração falar e expressar," "Eu acho que o fato dele ter adoecido também pode ter favorecido este esclarecimento mesmo dele, esta objetividade." *Tributo a Cazuzza*, DVD (2000; Brazil Som Livre Video). My translations.

²⁴⁸ Ana Galo and Marilda Varejão, "O Drama (e o Desabafo)" de Cazuzza, *Manchete*, 8.

²⁴⁹ In Cazuzza's biopic, *O Tempo não pára*, one of the final scenes shows Cazuzza singing onstage with a tank of oxygen trailing his emaciated body. Admiring fans throw roses at the stage to symbolize their solidarity for Cazuzza's struggle. According to Jacqueline Cantore, audience members at one of Cazuzza's concerts threw white lilies at his feet, a symbol of death and rebirth. Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

person ultimately came to serve as a model and inspiration for many people, HIV-positive and HIV-negative alike. Perhaps to rectify the terrible controversy it had created just months earlier, in an article on July 26, 1989 *Veja* magazine singled out Cazuzza as one of the people in Brazil who “did not just admit their [serological] condition, but also continued their lives as normal.”²⁵⁰ Cazuzza, the article continues, proves that “AIDS is not a ghost from which one should run, but rather an enemy that one must face.”²⁵¹

Indeed, Cazuzza changed the ways in which HIV/AIDS were discussed and understood in Brazil. Cazuzza proved that instead of submitting to AIDS, PWAs could continue to be productive (and even famous) members of society. According to author and literary critic Marcelo Secron Bessa, Cazuzza had become the “face” of AIDS in Brazil.²⁵² Bessa emphasizes that Cazuzza’s position as the “face” of AIDS in Brazil becomes even more significant in light of the National AIDS Program’s campaign, initiated in 1988 and described in Chapter One, that championed the slogan “Those who see faces do not see AIDS” (“*Quem vê cara não vê AIDS*”).²⁵³ Cazuzza was a pivotal figure in the shift from the media’s talking about PWAs—as in the case of Lauro Corona—to PWAs’ talking about themselves to the media.²⁵⁴ Cazuzza was instrumental in doing so because he was already famous and had the attention of many followers. According to Cantore, “Cazuzza[’s death] was a big hit for everybody because he was a very happy person. He was one of those beautiful boys that sang well, [was] beautiful to look at, full of life, a party boy, happy all the time. And then he died...and then we felt the power of this disease.”²⁵⁵ Cazuzza, in this regard, was a great mobilizer for the cause of fighting HIV/AIDS. Most important of all, his

²⁵⁰ “...não apenas admitem sua condição como enfrentam a doença tentando dar um andamento normal às suas atividades.” “O vírus dobra o astro,” *Veja*, July 26, 1989, 91. My translation.

²⁵¹ “A Aids não é um fantasma do qual se deve fugir, mas um inimigo que precisa ser enfrentado.” *Ibid.* My translation.

²⁵² Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos: autobiografias & AIDS*, 12.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 53.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

impact (like that of Magic Johnson in the United States) fomented widespread discussion of AIDS, thanks in part to the criticism resulting from the publication of the *Veja* article, which effectively turned the disease into a topic of household discussion and cause for outrage.

Cazuza's success as a role model for PWAs and an outspoken icon in the fight against AIDS is also due in large part to the culture of the "long *abertura*." The "long *abertura*" was comprised not only of overtures to political and social re-democratization in Brazil, but also was subject to many of the same ills of the military dictatorship that had preceded it, notably widespread suspicion and general disillusionment. Cazuza's music, especially "*Ideologia*," perfectly underlined the complexities of living through the "long *abertura*." Hopes for a new democratic government under Tancredo Neves had run extremely high until they were crushed by Brazil's "enemies" (such as José Sarney) who reclaimed power once again.²⁵⁶ Democratic elections would not succeed until four years after Cazuza's death, with President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's election in 1994. The bitterness and resentment that Brazilians felt towards their faltering country—which at the time was feeling the pains of inflation, debt, and political discontent—found vivid expression not only in Cazuza's music, but also in his personal life.

Cazuza had "fallen victim" to AIDS, yet another social ill that had come to plague Brazil. The mention of Cazuza's struggle with AIDS, however, actually served to open up dialogue with his audience, heightening the public discussion of all that troubled Brazil in the "long *abertura*." Cazuza's wish to maintain his station as a productive and valuable member of society in the face of AIDS was crushed by detractors, mirroring the process by which Brazilians' hopes for a democratic government was trampled by forces that coalesced against political openness.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁶ Cazuza, et al., "Ideologia," *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988.

²⁵⁷ It is particularly noteworthy to recall here that many people ascribed Tancredo Neves' untimely death to a conspiracy to oust him from the presidency.

Thus, just as good battled evil throughout *abertura*, so too did they in Cazuzza's life and music, underscored the threats to one's productive existence in Brazil in countless ways.



Renato Russo. Source:
escolademusicaderesende.blogspot.co



Renato Russo. Source:
badaueonline.com

Chapter Four: Renato Russo: Contradictions in Music and Life

As the credits roll on a DVD of interviews conducted with Renato Russo, produced posthumously by MTV, one line stands out as emblematic of Russo's life and career: "He was already a myth in life."²⁵⁸ Renato Russo, lead singer of the smash-hit rock band *Legião Urbana* (Urban Legion) was just that, yet Russo hardly resembled the typical rock star. Unlike Cazusa, Russo presented himself as dowdy, uncouth, sloppy, unattractive, bespectacled, and unathletic.²⁵⁹ There was something to Russo, however, that belied his appearance. He was reclusive, reckless, and beloved, a leader of a cult following of Jim Morrison proportions, a figure so popular that *Legião Urbana* came to earn the nickname *Religião Urbana* (Urban Religion).²⁶⁰ The nickname, though playful, actually spoke to a deep kinship that *Legião Urbana*'s listeners felt to the music, the band, and its leader's call-to-arms message.

Renato Russo is an iconic representative of the period of the "long *abertura*" of the 1980s and 90s. Through an analysis of his life and works, this chapter presents an image of Russo as a spokesman for the generation that suffered the economic, social, and political upheavals it faced during *abertura*. Russo also exemplifies the complexities and contradictions that played out on the ground level with regards to the advent of AIDS and its relationship to homosexuality. Russo, while openly and proudly gay, never admitted to being HIV-positive even as it became clear to everyone around him that AIDS was ravaging his body. In this regard, the chapter also links Russo to Cazusa, highlighting in particular the differences in their responses to learning of their seropositivity. Many plausible explanations of Russo's behavior dot this chapter, but

²⁵⁸ "Ele já era mito em vida." *Renato Russo*, Entrevistas, DVD, produced by Marcelo Fróes (2006; Rio de Janeiro: MTV, 1993-1994). My translation.

²⁵⁹ Miriam Chnaiderman, "Suicídios traem Russo," *Folha de São Paulo*, October 19, 1996.

²⁶⁰ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

beyond trying to explicate his actions as a public figure, it is critical to remember that Russo, like any other PWA, had a set of private considerations about his disease that eclipsed what he projected to the public.

Russo's Beginnings

Renato Manfredini, Jr., the son of Italian immigrants, was born on March 27, 1960 in Rio de Janeiro. He was raised in the capital city of Brasília, and lived in New York City for two years as a boy. Bookish, timid, and fluent in English, from an early age Russo drew inspiration from great intellectuals (his adopted last name of Russo pays homage to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Bertrand Russell, and Henri Rousseau).²⁶¹ As a solitary child, Russo developed a vivid imagination, which intensified during his teenage years after he contracted epiphysiolysis, a disease that left his legs paralyzed for two years and his mind in overdrive. As isolating as his illness was, it also proved to be a defining experience, for he began to dabble in music, playing guitar and creating an imaginary musical group called the 42nd Street Band.²⁶²

During Russo's early adulthood, in 1978, he and friends from Brasília formed a punk group called *Aborto Elétrico* (Electric Abortion).²⁶³ From this first experiment in punk, Russo and some new band members sowed the seeds for *Legião Urbana*, which finally coalesced into a three-person band, with Dado Villa-Lobos on electric guitar, Marcelo Bonfá on drums, and Russo on guitar backup and vocals. Traditionally known as a rock band, Russo's eclectic taste and aesthetic caused him to refine this classification. Claiming that *Legião* was "a folk band that

²⁶¹ Arthur Dapieve, *Brock: o rock brasileiro dos anos 80* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora 34, 1995), 131. It is noteworthy to mention that Brasília, like Washington, D.C., harbors a (nevertheless recent) legacy of intellectualism. As Brazil's capital, the city is rife with important political figures and all of the trappings of a cultural elite class. Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

²⁶² André Luis Campanha Demarchi, "Legionários do rock: Um estudo sobre quem pensa, ouve e vive a música da banda Legião Urbana" (Masters thesis, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 2006), 63.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 41.

works with rock'n'roll and is perceived as pop,” Russo, Villa-Lobos, and Bonfá, constantly redefined *Legião*'s music as they re-drew the boundaries they had set on previous albums.²⁶⁴

A Voice for Youth

No matter how the band was categorized, it is clear that from the outset *Legião* struck a deep chord with Brazilian youth.²⁶⁵ By its very nature, rock music speaks to youth, who join in rock music's critiques of society.²⁶⁶ *Legião Urbana* was no exception to this rule. Indeed, in interviews Russo repeatedly described *Legião Urbana* as a band that addressed the social complexities and anxieties of youth in urban areas—as evidenced by the name of the band—living in Brazil in the 1970s and 80s.²⁶⁷ Producing lyrics that spoke to the angst that his generation felt as their country lived through numerous social movements and upheavals, Russo soon gained the status as the spokesman for an entire generation, a role of which he was acutely aware.²⁶⁸

Russo's idolized position as a representative for a whole generation owes itself largely to *Legião Urbana*'s success more generally. *Legião*'s success, in turn, is indicative at least in part of music's unique ability both to serve as an escape from societal struggles and as a critique of the very society that produces such troubles. While this chapter does not purport to offer a complete discography of *Legião*'s albums, it is significant to transcribe the lyrics of one of their most acclaimed songs, “*Geração Coca-Cola*” (“Coca-Cola Generation,” which encompasses in

²⁶⁴ “...Uma banda folk, que trabalha com rock'n'roll e é percebida como pop.” Ricardo Alexandre, *Dias de luta: o rock e o Brasil dos anos 80* (Brasil, DBA: 2002), 257. My translation.

²⁶⁵ See, for example, Celso Araújo, “Fascista não tem nada a ver com Rock'N'Roll,” *Correio Braziliense*, November 17, 1985.

²⁶⁶ As discussed in Chapter One, there are divergent theories on the nature of rock music and whether it can be considered protest music. In Russo's case, his music was emphatically protest music, as will become clear through the course of this chapter.

²⁶⁷ Renato Russo, *Entrevistas*, 2006.

²⁶⁸ “Legião redescobre o caminho do palco,” *Zero Hora*, May 20, 1994.

its very title an attack on multinational, imported consumer culture and offers a substitute name for the *Geração Cara Pintada* / Generation Painted Face explicated in Chapter One) in order to demonstrate the mood of this sort of musical protest. Expressing dissatisfaction at the state of urban youth and the choices available to them, this perhaps-ironically upbeat song epitomizes Russo's "call to arms" for a social youth revolution. Claiming that "When we were born we were programmed / To receive what you push on us," Russo declared that "Now our time has arrived / We will spit the garbage back on you / We are the children of the revolution / We are the bourgeoisie without religion / We are the future of the nation / Coca-Cola generation."²⁶⁹ For millions of Brazilian teens listening to these lyrics, Russo seemed like a messiah, someone who finally could articulate their feelings, their angst, and their confusion. Russo's fans agreed with his main point, that Brazilians who lived under *abertura* lived in a godless country, one rife with political corruption, skyrocketing inflation, drugs, and disease.²⁷⁰

It is precisely this notion—that those who listened to *Legião Urbana's* albums related to what the artists were saying and saw in the musicians people similar to themselves—that undergirded Russo's personal and musical philosophy, as well as his explanation as to why his music succeeded.²⁷¹ Through their music, Russo and his bandmates became accessible to a general public. Their music became a vehicle for expression.²⁷² As an example of listeners' deep association with *Legião's* music, Russo once cited an episode at a shopping mall in Rio de

²⁶⁹ "Quando nascemos fomos programados / A receber o que vocês / Nos empurraram..." "Mas agora chegou nossa vez / Vamos cuspir de volta o lixo em cima de vocês // Somos os filhos da revolução / Somos burgueses sem religião / Somos o futuro da nação / Geração Coca-Cola." Russo, "Geração Coca-Cola," *Mais do mesmo*, 1998, EMI Brazil. My translation.

²⁷⁰ According to Jacqueline Cantore, however, it was "cool to be *coca-cola*" for most Brazilians. Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

²⁷¹ Arthur Dapieve and Paulo Adário, "Ok, estamos num empasse," *Jornal do Brasil, Caderno "B,"* June 27, 1988.

²⁷² *Renato Russo, Entrevistas*, 2006.

Janeiro wherein a crazed listener accused Russo of having stolen his life story for song lyrics.²⁷³ Of course, Russo had done nothing of the sort; it was merely that Russo's own life experiences, struggles, successes, and disappointments mirrored those of many other Brazilians. A whole generation of Brazilians came to idealize, appreciate, and analyze the impact *Legião's* music had on their lives and beliefs and, in turn, how the music reflected what they already believed. Russo and his bandmates were, in short, "those-guys-who-say-what-we-wanted-to-say."²⁷⁴

Reflections of Crises in Legião's Music

Mirroring the gloom of the times, the experiences conveyed through *Legião's* music were often dark and desperate. Although every generation complains about the ties that bind them, the "Coca-Cola Generation" dealt with the wide spectrum of economic, political, and social problems explicated in Chapter One. Russo, for example, specifically addressed in interviews the soaring inflation that crippled Brazil's economy in the 1980s, one legacy of Latin America's "Lost Decade."²⁷⁵ Steeped in debt and with little possibility for upward mobility, Brazilian youth and adults alike turned to violence and drugs as outlets for their rage and despair, Russo being one famous example of someone seduced by the pervasive networks of drugs in this generation.²⁷⁶ Violence and anger were typical responses to a myriad of problems that marked the 1980s in Brazil, and many of *Legião's* songs speak to general disillusionment and sadness.

²⁷³ Alex Antunes, "Legião errante: a longa jornada do trio, da fábrica de hits até o neoprogressivo," *Bizz*, January, 1992.

²⁷⁴ "...aqueles-caras-que-falam-o-que-a-gente-queria-dizer." Humberto Finatti, "Legião Urbana 'faz as pazes' com SP," *Folha de São Paulo*, June 6, 1994. My translation.

²⁷⁵ Renato Russo, *Entrevistas*, 2006.

²⁷⁶ The aggressive nature of Brazil's youth culture in the 1980s came to a head even at one of *Legião's* concerts in Brasília in 1988. Members of the audience rioted during the concert, throwing objects at the band onstage. And, in what they believed was the spirit of the message in "*Geração Coca-Cola*," fans destroyed advertisements by Pepsi, a sponsor of the concert, claiming that multinationals had no place in the venue. Russo and his bandmates, so appalled with the disturbance, actually stopped performing live for a while. The pause in *Legião's* performances after this catastrophic show fomented rumors that something was not quite right with Russo and retrospectively became a signal—rightly or not—of Russo's rapidly deteriorating health. "Novo Legião Urbana chega às lojas dia 20," *Folha de São Paulo*, September 2, 1996.

The song “*Pais e filhos*” (“Fathers and Sons”) details a father’s suicide; “*Há Tempos*” (“Some Time Ago”) presciently laments that young people fall sick. One of *Legião*’s most acclaimed songs, “*Faroeste Caboclo*” (“*Caboclo* Western”), relates the sad epic of João de Santo Cristo, a poor teen from the interior of Brazil who gets involved in drug trafficking, a story not unfamiliar to many of *Legião*’s listeners.²⁷⁷

The entire album “V” (1991) echoes the deception and grief that Brazilians felt after Tancredo Neves’ death.²⁷⁸ As aware as Russo was of national “ills,” be it Tancredo’s death or inflation or widespread violence, he seemed to be just as forthcoming about his own personal demons and misfortunes. Russo struggled throughout his life with drug and alcohol addictions, depression, and a broken heart. Russo also had a complicated home life: after he accidentally fathered a son, Giuliano, Russo’s parents raised the boy in Brasília with the full awareness that Russo was incapable of rearing a child in a healthy environment.²⁷⁹

Russo and Homosexuality: A Policy of Honesty

Russo assumed his homosexuality publicly, but unlike his struggles with drugs or alcohol, Russo never explicitly presented his sexual orientation as a burden. At 18, in the year 1978, he had come out of the closet to his family. In 1989 he came out publicly.²⁸⁰ He claimed,

I don’t believe that a person defines his sexual life until age 25. A person isn’t formed [until that point]. For me, this is something absolutely normal. Once and for all: what exists is sex. I was raised to be honest and sincere. There came a moment in which I decided not to write any more music, receiving fan letters and cheating my

²⁷⁷ Renato Russo et. al. “Pais e filhos,” *Mais do Mesmo*, 1998 EMI Brazil. Renato Russo et al. “Há tempos,” *As Quatro Estações*, 1989, EMI Brazil; Renato Russo, “Faroeste Caboclo,” *Que País é Este? 1978/1987*, 1987 EMI Brazil.

²⁷⁸ Renato Russo, *Entrevistas*, 2006.

²⁷⁹ Maria Helena Passos, “Roqueiro Brasileiro - Renato Russo,” *Marie Claire*, January 1995.

²⁸⁰ Arthur Dapieve, *Renato Russo: o trovador solitário*. (Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará, Secretaria Municipal de Cultura, 2000), 61.

public. If I am a certain way, accept me as I am. If you don't like it, it's your problem.²⁸¹

When his mother expressed fear and reservation at his choice to assume his homosexuality, Russo claimed, "Mom, it is precisely to put an end to this prejudice that we need to speak out."²⁸² Russo's commitment to gay causes endured until the end of his life, when he anonymously donated on his deathbed a large sum of money²⁸³ to the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) in order to finance the seventeenth international conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 1995.

This bold statement exemplifies Russo's sense of responsibility to act as a mouthpiece for his generation. And Russo believed that, as a role model for a whole generation of Brazilians, he could not be closeted about his sexuality. In this regard, he had no intentions of fulfilling anyone's expectations (except his own) of what a rock star should be like. It is, of course, notable that Russo—along with Ney Matogrosso and arguably Cazuza—was able to live and perform as an openly gay music star and remain as popular as ever. This feat points to at least two distinct realities about Brazil in the 1980s and 90s. First, Russo was undoubtedly courageous to have tackled his homosexuality so publicly, given the backlash that could have ensued. Second, the possibility of Russo's being openly gay suggests that there was a growing climate of tolerance in Brazil at the time that would have allowed him to do so.

²⁸¹ "Eu não acredito que uma pessoa tenha definição de sua vida sexual até os 25 anos. A pessoa não está formada. Para mim isso é uma coisa absolutamente normal. De uma vez por todas: o que existe é sexo. Fui educado para ser honesto e sincero. Chegou um momento em que decidi não escrever mais essas músicas, recebendo cartas de fãs e enganando meu público. Se eu sou de uma determinada maneira, me aceite como sou. Se não gosta, problema seu." Humberto Finatti, "Legião Urbana 'faz as pazes' com SP." My translation.

²⁸² "'Mãe, é justamente para acabar com esse preconceito que nós temos que falar.'" Arthur Dapieve, *Renato Russo: o trovador solitário*, 61. My translation.

²⁸³ Historians mark this meeting of ILGA as a pivotal meeting for the gay movement in Brazil. See James N. Green, "More Love and More Desire: The Building of a Brazilian Movement," 91-109, in *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999); João S. Trevisán, *Devassos no paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*, 317. Although Russo donated the money anonymously on his deathbed, it was commonplace knowledge among gay activists that the money was his.

In João Silvério Trevisán's book *Devassos no paraíso* (Perverts in paradise) he claims that Russo could be so open about his homosexuality because being gay was just one more source of pain and hardship—along with, for example, Russo's drug and alcohol addictions—that Russo could share with his audience. Trevisán's interpretation is different from the one presented here. Whereas this thesis argues that homosexuality for Russo never caused the same amount of heartache that other issues in his personal life did, Trevisán does not distinguish between Russo's homosexuality and other aspects of his personal life and the lives of others: "the amorous anguishes of a young gay person are also the anguishes of Brazil."²⁸⁴ Trevisán contextualizes Russo's openness about being gay by claiming he drew strength from other people who dealt publicly with private problems, most notably people who admitted publicly to being HIV-positive.²⁸⁵ Besides the obvious influence of Cazuzza, who admitted to being HIV-positive in 1989, Trevisán claims that,

It is enough to remember the audacity [of admitting to be HIV-positive] of one Herbert de Souza (Betinho) when he found out he had AIDS (still seen as a "disease of fairies" ["bichas"])—even given that his heterosexuality had been amply noted, in order to protect him from guilt...But there is also the significant gesture of Herbert Daniel: after making clear that he was a gay man infected with AIDS, he integrated himself in the platform of Fernando Gabeira [a fellow revolutionary against the military dictatorship], as candidate for the vice presidency of the Republic, in 1989, through the Green Party. His gesture was without doubt symbolic...homosexuals took roles beyond the [gay] ghetto.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴ "...as angústias amorosas de um jovem homossexual também são angústias do Brasil." João S. Trevisán, *Devassos no paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*, 319. My translation.

²⁸⁵ "Basta lembrar o atrevimento participativo de um Herbert de Souza (Betinho), quando se descobriu soropositivo para Aids (ainda vista como 'doença de bicha')—mesmo que sua heterossexualidade tenha sido amplamente noticiada, para resguardá-lo de culpa...Mas há também o gesto significativo de Herbert Daniel: após deixar clara sua situação de homossexual infectado pela Aids, integrou-se na chapa de Fernando Gabeira, como candidato à vice-presidência da República, em 1989, pelo Partido Verde. Seu gesto foi sem dúvida simbólico...homossexuais tomavam seus lugares para além do gueto." Ibid. My translation.

²⁸⁶ Ibid. My translation. As mentioned in Chapter Two, both Betinho and Herbert Daniel were activists in and founders of ABIA (and in Daniel's case, Pela VIDDA). Betinho was a heterosexual hemophiliac; Daniel was a gay revolutionary.

It is of particular note here that Trevisán nominates AIDS, of all things, to be what lent Russo the bravery to assume his homosexuality. This assortment seems not to make sense, however, given that Russo never admitted to being seropositive. The idea of the gay “ghetto” of Chapter Three returns in this quotation, this time linked with AIDS so that it opens an interpretation of HIV-positive people forming a “ghetto” of their own.

Yet Russo knew that some people might frown upon his assumed homosexuality.²⁸⁷ In one revealing interview Russo expressed, “The worst danger is for the public. One fine day they are going to discover that their idol is vulnerable, and it’s very painful because messiahs don’t exist.”²⁸⁸ Russo’s awareness of his own failings and imperfections, real and imagined, shaped the core of his policy of always dealing with his public with honesty and authenticity. Claiming that Brazilian youth were “in panic and in need,” and perhaps judging himself to be as well, Russo sought to be a guiding light.²⁸⁹ His songs express this tendency.

Though Russo’s desire to transmit information to Brazilian youth manifests itself in nearly all of his songs, perhaps the best example of this tendency can be found in his solo album produced in 1994. In his first departure from *Legião Urbana*, Russo launched *The Stonewall Celebration Concert*, in which he sings 21 cover songs in English all with themes of spiritual freedom, resistance to oppression, and personal rights.²⁹⁰ The album was produced as a 25-year commemoration of the Stonewall riots of 1969 in New York City, in which a homosexual crowd

²⁸⁷ This is especially true because the synonymy of AIDS and homosexuality meant that some people might have equated his admission of homosexuality with an admission of seropositivity.

²⁸⁸ “O maior perigo é para o público. Um belo dia, ele vai descobrir que seu ídolo tem pés de barro, é uma coisa muito dolorosa porque messias não existem.” Arthur Dapieve and Paulo Adário, “Ok, estamos num empasse.” My translation.

²⁸⁹ *Renato Russo, Entrevistas*, 2006. Original subtitle. It should be noted, however, that Russo expressed extreme discomfort with his assumed role as the mouthpiece of an entire generation. *Ibid.*, 157. In one particularly vehement interview, for example, Russo expressed exacerbation with his responsibility, albeit self-assumed, to dispel cruelty such as homophobia: “I don’t want to do any more gay activism. In my head, I decided, very humbly, that who needs help are heterosexuals” (“Eu não quero mais fazer ativismo gay. Na minha cabeça, eu decidi, muito humildemente, que quem precisa de ajuda são os heterossexuais.” Renato Russo, Simone Assad, ed. *Renato Russo de A a Z: as idéias do líder da Legião Urbana* (Campo Grande: Letra Livre, 2000), 121. My translation).

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

in a Greenwich Village bar resisted a homophobic police raid. The Stonewall riots opened the doors for an imminent, wider Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual (LGBT) rights movement in the United States, and then globally, including the gay rights movement in Brazil.²⁹¹

Stonewall is a clear departure from the work Russo had done with *Legião Urbana*, not only because the content and theme of *Stonewall* were intensely personal for Russo, but because the album was produced entirely in English, limiting listening access to only the more educated members of the Brazilian public.²⁹² Russo offered a variety of rationales for the production of *Stonewall*. He claimed that he sang in English because he wanted to exorcize a bad breakup he had had with an American man; he had an affinity with the English language since his childhood days of living in New York City; the Stonewall riots hit him close to home; and these songs did not belong in the same realm as the music produced by *Legião*.²⁹³

More than a commemoration of the Stonewall riots, *The Stonewall Celebration Concert* was a direct repudiation of homophobia. Homophobia for Russo—although of very immediate and personal concern—was often subsumed under another term that he used freely: “fascism.”²⁹⁴ Russo offered many loose, inchoate definitions of “fascism,” but they all ultimately pointed to repression of freedoms, be they sexual or otherwise.²⁹⁵ For Russo and his generation, after having endured periods of rigorous censorship during the military dictatorship, any form of censorship (social, political, personal, written or not) left them disillusioned. Russo’s intolerance for repression, in fact, caused him to go so far as to say that “fascist” skinheads who antagonized

²⁹¹ The term “LGBT”—lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual—is used anachronistically here. “LGBT” did not come into use until the 1990s, but its utilization is convenient here.

²⁹² Although *Legião* had produced music in English before, most notably “Feedback Song for a Dying Friend” in 1989, never had they produced an entire album in English, let alone one with more than one English song.

²⁹³ Renato Russo, *Entrevistas*, 2006.

²⁹⁴ Renato Russo, *Entrevistas*, 2006; Celso Araújo, “Fascista não tem nada a ver com Rock’N’Roll”

²⁹⁵ Edward MacRae affirms that a sentiment arose in the 1970s and 1980s that “the pleasure of the individual was deemed the greater good. Wherever pleasure was absent, the effects of authoritarianism (also called fascism, racism, or machismo, almost indiscriminantly [sic]) were detected.” Edward MacRae, “Homosexual Identities in Transitional Brazilian Politics,” 186.

gays (i.e. homophobes) were in fact acting on their own sexual repression, for they were actually closeted gays.²⁹⁶ Thus, had Russo chosen not to assume his own homosexuality publicly, it would have counteracted his desire to end homophobia. In other words, in the “new” Brazil of *abertura* that was trying to emerge from the ruins of the dictatorship, a country that exalted personal freedoms, Russo could not partake in what he termed as fascism.

Negotiating Definitions of Homosexuality: Openly Gay but Still as Accessible as Ever

While *Stonewall* is clearly the best example of Russo’s work that undertakes homosexual and homoerotic overtones, these themes are evident in other songs produced by *Legião Urbana*. “*Meninos e meninas*” (“Boys and Girls”), which appeared in 1989, was the first to address Russo’s sexual orientation: “I think I like São Paulo / I like São João / I like São Francisco and São Sebastião / And I like boys and girls.”²⁹⁷ The song, which playfully declares Russo’s bisexuality, does so with an irreverent twist and a twofold play on words. First, the Portuguese word “São” translates to “Saint” in English, thereby incorporating a religious context into “*Meninos e meninas*” (the city São Paulo, for example, is named for Saint Paul, founder of the Christian church). Second, the song offers a clever incorporation of names of cities with notable gay populations: San Francisco and São Paulo are the most obvious, but author Angélica Schlude Erica Castilho offers an analysis of the other cities mentioned in “*Meninos e meninas*” in her book *Depois do fim: vida, amor e morte nas canções da Legião Urbana* (After the end: life, love, and death in *Legião Urbana*’s songs). According to Castilho, São João is a generic enough name

²⁹⁶ Ibid. In this same vein, at the disastrous concert in Brasília in 1988, as Russo watched with horror the violence invading stage, his response was to shout, “This is the kind of thing that a kid does who can’t find a girlfriend and ends up masturbating in the bathroom” (“Isso é coisa de moleque que não consegue arrumar namorada e fica se masturbando no banheiro”): Ricardo Alexandre, *Dias de luta: o rock e o Brasil dos anos 80*, 296-297. My translation.

²⁹⁷ “Acho que gosto de São Paulo / Gosto de São João / Gosto de São Francisco e São Sebastião / E eu gosto de meninos e meninas.” Renato Russo et al. “Meninos e meninas,” *As Quatro Estações*, 1989, EMI Brazil. My translation.

in Brazil that it could stand for any city.²⁹⁸ More important, though, São Sebastião stands for Rio de Janeiro, a noteworthy city in light of gay culture because of Rio's legendary celebration of Carnival.²⁹⁹ During Carnival, Brazil's raucous annual pre-Lenten festivities, people from all walks of life can invert their social roles, turning hierarchies and gender and sexual norms upside-down.³⁰⁰

Yet it is notable that "*Meninos e meninas*" does not name Russo as gay per sé, but rather, as bisexual. "Bisexuality" and "pansexuality" are terms that straddle the line between denoting true attraction to both genders and serving as a word that masks or dilutes homosexuality. In interviews, Russo seemed to have understood not only this nuance, but the general Brazilian public's lack thereof in conceptualizing sexuality. In articles, interviews, and common perception, Russo was repeatedly identified, and self-identified, as gay, but his awareness of patterns of his own sexuality was much deeper. When asked in an interview when and how he had come to assume his homosexuality publicly, Russo said, "I consider myself pansexual, but I am what people call homosexual."³⁰¹ Whether he simplified his sexual identity for the sake of his fans' understanding is difficult to ascertain, but it is certain that sexuality was not so cut-and-dry for Russo.

Russo, however, did not subscribe to the stereotypization of sexual identities. In this vein, perhaps in trying to complicate the Brazilian public's conceptions of homosexuality, he sought to combat the negative stereotypes frequently associated with homosexuality. In one interview Russo claimed,

²⁹⁸ Angélica Schlude Erica Castilho, *Depois do fim: vida, amor e morte nas canções da Legião Urbana* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Hama, 2002), 128-129.

²⁹⁹ Ibid. When originally colonized, Rio de Janeiro was initially called, "São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro."

³⁰⁰ For a more in-depth explanation, see James N. Green, *Beyond Carnival: Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999).

³⁰¹ "Me considero pansexual, mas sou o que as pessoas chamariam de homosexual." "Nunca fui santo," *IstoÉ*, April 27, 1994. My translation.

What happens in this country is the following: if you have a posture of a man, you aren't considered homosexual. People come up to me and say [with an affected voice], 'no Renato, you aren't gay, you don't *swish*.' Okay. Since when do I need to put on a wig and go out dancing *samba*? It's because we are a Catholic society, macho, and 'phallocratic.' I have some very educated friends who are heterosexual, married, but everyone thinks they're fags. But I know tons of big, strong guys that no one would say are [gay]. But they are. So, this is part of my life. It's not a problem. It's important to talk about this. If I were part of another minority and there were things that bothered me, I think that, given the position of an artist, I would speak. It's not to be politically correct or to draw attention. I've had girlfriends, I've had a son, but I like to be able to sing a Bob Dylan song today saying, 'If you see *him*' instead of 'If you see her.'³⁰²

Here Russo again alludes to "fascists," in this case, people who repress or oppress expressions of (homo)sexuality. Beyond that, Russo presents a complex argument by utilizing the slur "fag" in describing religion while hailing the Bible as a source of legitimacy for homosexuality while delivering a two-fold critique of Brazilian conceptions of sexuality.³⁰³

First, he claims that sexual identities can and do contradict accepted gay or straight norms.

³⁰² "O que acontece nesse país é o seguinte: se você tem uma postura de homem, você não é considerado homossexual. Chegam pessoas para mim e dizem [com a voz afetada] 'não Renato, você não é gay, você não desmunheca'. Tá bom. Desde quando eu preciso botar uma peruca e sair rebolando? Isso porque somos uma sociedade católica, machista e falocrata. Tenho amigos muito educados que são heterossexuais mesmo, casados, mas todo mundo acha que eles são bichas. Mas conheço um monte desses garotões fortões que nunca ninguém vai dizer que é. Mas são. Então, isso faz parte da minha vida. Não é um problema. É importante falar sobre isso. Se eu fizesse parte de outra minoria e se existissem coisas que me incomodassem, acho que, tendo a posição de artista, eu falaria. Não é para ser politicamente correto ou para chama atenção. Já tive namorada, já tive filho, mas gosto de hoje poder cantar uma música de Bob Dylan dizendo "If you see him" em vez de "If you see her" ("Se você o vir" em vez de "Se você a vir")." Ibid. My translation, emphasis added to "him." The reference to Bob Dylan belongs to *The Stonewell Celebration Concert*.

³⁰³ As evidenced by how Russo mentions saints' names in "*Meninos e meninas*," he continually tested the boundaries of linking homosexuality and religion. Russo claimed, for example, that he liked to "play with the unconscious" ("Gosto muito de brincar com o inconsciente") connection between the two, which sees its strongest manifestation in that a song he wrote about Cazuzá's death due to AIDS, "Feedback Song for a Dying Friend," was going to be called "Catholic Boys" ("Rapazes Católicos"). Before he changed the song's content and title, the chorus had been, "Take your dick out, boys" ("Põe o pau pra fora, garotão"). (Carlos Siqueira Júnior, *Letra, música e outras conversas*, 90). This speaks to a much deeper conflict that Russo felt with regards to his homosexuality. On the one hand, Russo had been ready to assume his homosexuality from an early age, bravely embracing a policy of truth with himself, his family, and his audience. Russo, who had known that he liked boys from the age of four, could not reason how homosexuality could be unnatural if his feelings had begun at such a pure, young age. On the other hand, as the son of Roman Catholic Italian immigrants, there was the ever-present self-condemnation of homosexuality as sick, unnatural behavior (Ricardo Alexandre, *Dias de luta: o rock e o Brasil dos anos 80*, 362). My translations.

Second, he insinuates that it is presumptuous to assume anyone's sexual orientation. Both of these comments speak to the complex constructions of sexuality in Brazil explained in Chapter Two. This is not to suggest, however, that Russo entirely resisted subscribing to slang, slurs, and generalizations. In one interview, for example, Russo discussed Catholicism and homosexuality openly. He declared, "I think that the Catholic religion is the most faggy (*viado*) thing that exists. All the saints were gay. They didn't have sex because they were saints. David had a great friend, which is the great homosexual relationship of the Bible: David and Jonathan. Jesus was betrayed with a kiss. Those that most oppress sexuality are religions."³⁰⁴

It is important to mention here the treatment of homosexuality and AIDS within Brazil's Catholic Church. Homosexuality and AIDS were extremely divisive forces within the Brazilian clergy, creating a schism between liberal and conservative factions. Although homosexuality had long been condemned in the church, AIDS was a complex problem for a Catholic Church that was losing many of its members to the disease. According to a 1987 article,

The Brazilian Catholic Church has recently spoken out in favour of caring for AIDS victims, who it says suffer from the stigma and misinformation that lepers suffered centuries ago. However, the Catholic hierarchy is sharply divided on how to go about a health campaign.

To conservative churchmen, AIDS is regarded as a divine [sic] punishment against the promiscuous and homosexuals. They have called for improvement in medical and sanitary practices, as well as a clean-up of morals.

Cardinal Eugenio Sales [sic], the conservative Archbishop of Rio, said a government educational campaign that counsels use of condoms only 'foments the principal source of contamination,' homosexuality and the swapping of partners.

So-called progressive bishops, led by Cardinal Arns, have attempted to tread a delicate theological line. They have obeyed Catholic doctrine, which condemns practices such as

³⁰⁴ "Eu acho a religião católica a coisa mais viada que existe. Todos os santos eram gay. Eles não transavam porque eram santos. Davi teve um grande amigo, que é o grande relacionamento homossexual da Bíblia: Davi e Jônatas. Jesus foi traído com um beijo. Quem mais oprime a sexualidade das pessoas são as religiões." Carlos Siqueira Júnior, *Letra, música e outras conversas* (Rio de Janeiro: Gryphus, 1995), 95. My translation.

homosexuality, sex outside of marriage, and artificial birth control (prophylactics). Yet, instead of public condemnations, they have called for more 'self-discipline' in sexual relations.³⁰⁵

Many left-leaning Brazilian clergymen responded compassionately to the marginalized PWAs, fighting in favor of the oppressed. Yet the complicated theological aspects of addressing safer sex meant that the clergy had to negotiate a whole host of religious conundrums with regards to the AIDS epidemic, as expressed in the excerpt above. Beyond that, the Catholic Church had to confront deaths caused by AIDS within the clergy.³⁰⁶ Suddenly, AIDS affected people from all walks of life, including those committed to serving the Church.³⁰⁷

Russo publicly came out of the closet to *Bizz* magazine in 1990, three months after the song "*Meninos e meninas*" had been released. Yet *Bizz* magazine, a music review magazine similar to *Rolling Stone* in the United States, treated Russo's coming out as a quiet story, considering the frisson it could have generated. Writer Ricardo Alexandre attributes *Bizz's* respectful treatment of Russo's coming out to the fact that the Brazilian press had learned not to exploit the private sexual lives of celebrities after the tremendous backlash that followed *Veja* magazine's grotesque, voyeuristic depiction of Cazuzza sick with AIDS in April of 1989.³⁰⁸ And, indeed, perhaps Russo's coming out was not as headline-worthy as Cazuzza's seropositivity.

A more straightforward explanation for the lack of brouhaha over Russo's coming out is that his audience already knew that he was interested in men from the lyrics of "*Meninos e meninas*." Perhaps the explanation is simply that homosexuality was no longer a novelty by

³⁰⁵ Mac Margolis, "The Fight Against AIDS: Campaign Divides Brazil's Bishops," *The Times (London)*, February 16, 1987.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ The rift in the Catholic Church continues until this day without a conclusive consensus on how to proceed with AIDS prevention. The schism works in two ways, both between Brazilian clergy and Vatican authority, and between Brazilian clergy and progressive AIDS prevention programs run through the ministry of health. See, for example, Kevin G. Hall, "AIDS Fight Puts Brazil's Bishops and Health Officials at Odds; Report On A Free-Condom Policy," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 9, 2004.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

1990. The gay rights movement in Brazil had been established over a decade earlier, although its focus had been largely re-oriented early because of the onslaught of AIDS. Though homosexuality may not have been mainstreamed—owing in part to its association with AIDS—its inclusion in public discourse cannot be denied, and it very much predated Russo’s admission.

There is no clear proof that Russo’s coming out negatively affected his popularity, perhaps because his fans were loyal to him or apathetic to his homosexuality.³⁰⁹ Furthermore, perhaps because Russo did not project a feminine image of himself, his straight fans could continue to associate with him. It is perhaps precisely because Russo did not satisfy the characteristics of a stereotypically “gay” man—compounded by the fact that rock musicians are traditionally categorized as masculine and heterosexual—that Russo took such a firm stance on declaring and de-stigmatizing his homosexuality.

When discussing his smash hit “*Meninos e meninas*,” Russo emphasized that the lyrics in the song were in reference to an ex-boyfriend of his. “But,” he continued, “I think it’s important to think about the public. Unless I have a very serious statement that I’d like to make, I prefer to give the greatest possible openness (*abertura*) [of interpretation].”³¹⁰ What Russo effectively accomplished in this sentence was to combat prejudice: although Russo wrote songs with gay themes, the fact that they could be interpreted as “straight” songs is suggestion enough that Russo did not believe homosexuality to be foreign, but rather, that it was something so common that it could even be mistaken or ignored.

³⁰⁹ For example, Russo’s other major solo album besides *Stonewall, Equilíbrio Distante*—which was recorded in Italian and released five years after his coming out—sold more than 1.3 million copies, a colossal number in Brazilian record sales (“Sai mais um CD do baú do Legião Urbana,” *Estado de São Paulo Online*, March 22, 2001, <http://www.estadao.com.br/arquivo/artelazer/2001/not20010322p5250.htm>, 15 October 2008). These record sales are particularly noteworthy given that the album was produced in a foreign language.

³¹⁰ “Mas eu acho importante pensar no público. A não ser que eu tenha um statement muito sério que eu queria que seja aquilo, prefiro dar a maior abertura possível.” Carlos Siqueira Júnior, *Letra, música e outras conversas* (Rio de Janeiro: Gryphus, 1995), 78. My translation.

In fact, when Russo launched *Stonewall Celebration Concert*, he openly claimed that his intention was to set an example for the Brazilian public so that gay men would not have to struggle as he had to; it was his way of combating “fascism.”³¹¹ In redefining the common conception of what it meant to “be a man,” Russo claimed that it had nothing to do with shows of physical prowess, but rather, everything to do with the recognition of the humanity and dignity of each person.³¹² Yet for all of Russo’s efforts to encourage people to respect each other, especially in terms of respecting other peoples’ sexualities, he did not believe that his music had the capacity to change the world.³¹³ Whether this disparagement of music—Russo’s lifeblood—was his usual dose of self-deprecation is difficult to tell. What is clear is that Russo’s intentions were grand but his expectations far less so.³¹⁴

Renato Russo and AIDS: Denying the Undeniable and Contradictions in his Public Persona

Besides celebrating personal liberties and commemorating an internationally renowned gay rights movement, *Stonewall Celebration Concert* had a larger overarching achievement. Fifty percent of the album’s proceeds went to support *Ação Cidadania Contra a Miséria e a Fome* (“Citizenship Action against Misery and Hunger”), a fundraising campaign headed by Herbert “Betinho” de Souza.³¹⁵ Although Russo did mention in passing that one of the foundations that *Ação Cidadania* supported was *Sociedade Viva Cazuzo*, a house for HIV-positive children named in memorial to Cazuzo, it is noteworthy that Russo never acknowledged

³¹¹ “Nunca fui santo,” *IstoÉ*, April 27, 1994; Renato Russo, *Conversações com Renato Russo* (Campo Grande: Letra Livre Editora, 1996), 186. In this sense, Russo’s expression of pain in dealing with his own homosexuality corresponds with Trevisán’s analysis.

³¹² *Ibid.* This statement is in accordance with Russo’s philosophy on classifying rock music: Russo believed that rock was not about being showy and screaming on a CD, but rather, that rock was something that is living and contains a history, an art form that deserves the respect of its listeners (Renato Russo, *Conversações com Renato Russo*, 71).

³¹³ Renato Russo, *Conversações com Renato Russo*, 134.

³¹⁴ “Para descobrir outra Legião,” *Zero Hora* (Porto Alegre: May 28, 1994).

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

that the campaign director himself, Betinho, was a hemophiliac living with AIDS and an active voice in the battle to gain rights for PWAs.³¹⁶

The fact that *Stonewall* aimed to confront bias and celebrate homosexuality but disregarded any overt mention of the fight against AIDS represents a minor example of the contradictory nature of Renato Russo's negotiations of homosexuality and seropositivity. As nobly as he fought to encourage self-respect and respect for others, as demonstrated in particular in his openness about his sexuality and disgust for homophobia, his policy of complete honesty to his public left one gaping hole: Russo never admitted to being HIV-positive and remained largely reticent about the disease in broad terms. In fact, when he died of complications of AIDS on October 11, 1996, it was in seclusion in his Rio de Janeiro apartment, having denied his illness until the day he died.³¹⁷ His family members continued to deny his illness even after Russo's death.³¹⁸ The analysis that follows seeks to understand forces in Brazilian culture that made it conceivable for Russo to be open about his sexuality but not about his disease, despite (or perhaps because of) the link between homosexuality and AIDS that existed in Brazil.

It is tempting to speculate as to why Russo denied his seropositivity, even though he did address illness and dying in veiled terms in some of his works. Perhaps his own mortality scared him too much to confront his illness. Perhaps he thought of AIDS as the ultimate form of ostracism (possibly a vestige of his Roman Catholic roots). Perhaps he did not wish to stereotype gay men any more than they already were by becoming yet one more gay man to fall ill to AIDS.

³¹⁶ Betinho, in fact, was so vocal in the fight against AIDS that it is worth recalling that in 1986 he co-founded ABIA (*Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS* – The Brazilian Interdisciplinary AIDS Association), which was and is Brazil's leading think tank/NGO/archive on AIDS.

³¹⁷ Arthur Dapieve, *Trovador Solitário*, 11. In one particularly telling interview, after being asked whether he was HIV-positive, Russo erupted, "Such bad vibes! I don't have AIDS. What an idiotic question. They once asked me that at Circo Voador [an avant-garde venue for Brazilian artists in Rio], and I never went back there" ("Mas que baixo astral! Eu não estou com AIDS. Que pergunta idiota! Uma vez, no Circo Voador, também me perguntaram isso, e eu nunca mais voltei lá"), Renato Russo, Júlio Vasco, Renato Guima, ed., *Conversações com Renato Russo* (Campo Grande: Letra Livre Editora, 1996), 150. My translation.

³¹⁸ "Mãe do cantor Renato Russo afirma que ele não tinha Aids," *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 12, 1996.

Perhaps he did not want to be recognized and categorized solely on the basis of his personal struggle with AIDS.³¹⁹ Perhaps he did not think that he had anything to add to Cazuza's strong imprint on discussing AIDS through music. Perhaps Russo had fought for and against too many things for too long and simply could not take on another fight against another cause: AIDS. Whatever the reason, it is unfortunately impossible to know exactly what motivated Russo's decision to remain silent about his disease. This chapter segment, therefore, will not attempt to further conjecture about Russo's rationale, but rather, to analyze his choice to deny his serostatus in the context of his work, public, country, and contemporaries. One particular question to keep in mind is why, if Russo's admission to homosexuality had not noticeably affected his status and the public's opinion of him, might there have been a concern that his seropositivity would?

Learning from Contemporaries

Renato Russo and Cazuza are often grouped together in the collective memory of Brazilian rock music of the 1980s and 1990s. Only one year apart in age, they have both been called the greatest poets of their generation, remarkable artists who left a lasting impression on popular culture.³²⁰ There is, of course, as much dissimilarity as there is similarity between their trajectories. As Russo himself explained, Cazuza was brought up in a privileged, highly visible social stratum, whereas Russo grew up an unknown; Cazuza was a sex symbol for Brazilian youth, whereas Russo was homely in appearance; Cazuza sought a personal career, whereas Russo never dreamt of leaving his band.³²¹ Ultimately, though, they were both famous rock stars

³¹⁹ This would later become Caio Fernando Abreu's complaint, to be explored in the next chapter.

³²⁰ André Luis Campanha Demarchi, "Legionários do rock: Um estudo sobre quem pensa, ouve e vive a música da banda Legião Urbana," 65.

³²¹ Renato Russo, *Conversações com Renato Russo*, 90.

circulating in similar social and professional circles, both of them reckless, willful, and passionate. They both also flirted with or embraced bisexuality and/or homosexuality.

The striking difference between Cazuza and Russo, in the media at the time and retrospectively, was the way in which they approached their seropositivity.³²² If Cazuza's public admission to being seropositive (even though one could argue that it was a forced admission) was a defiant effort to open the discussion of AIDS, then Russo's denial of being HIV-positive was effectively a submission to the social prejudices and trauma that AIDS can cause. Even when the whole country saw that Russo was sick and suspected his demise—even when Russo could have confirmed rumors about his disease and sought the support of his loyal public—he remained silent.³²³

Although Russo never publicly declared his seropositivity, he did address the topic of AIDS in his interviews and his work. The most notable example is, in fact, a song that he composed for Cazuza in 1989, "Feedback Song for a Dying Friend," which directly established a linkage with Cazuza's death, citing Cazuza's "light brown eyes" and, in singing "the two of us so close to our own hearts,"³²⁴ possibly listing a connection between Cazuza's and Russo's shared experience of illness.³²⁵ In response to a question in an interview about "Feedback Song," Russo declared, "it was important as an artist to position myself on *this*. Let's be honest. There is a homosexual relationship in music. I'm in one of the risk groups...I don't want to be the martyr for the gay cause. Prejudice comes from lack of understanding, from fear."³²⁶ What the "this" is

³²² Celina Côrtes, "Segredos de Renato Russo," *IstoÉ*, October 23, 1996.

³²³ Ricardo Alexandre, "Doente, artista evitava aparecer em público," *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 11, 1996, A22.

³²⁴ Renato Russo et al. "Feedback Song for a Dying Friend," *As Quatro Estações*, 1989, EMI Brazil.

³²⁵ Arthur Dapieve, *Renato Russo: o trovador solitário*, 104.

³²⁶ "Era importante como artista eu me posicionar sobre isso. Sejamos honestos: há uma relação homossexual na música. Estou nos grupos de risco...Não quero ser o mártir da causa gay. O preconceito vem do desconhecimento, do medo." Renato Russo, Simone Assad, ed. *Renato Russo de A a Z: as idéias do líder da Legião Urbana*, 23. My translation. Emphasis added.

on which Russo felt he had to position himself is unclear, for he never explicitly mentioned AIDS in or regarding the song he had written for someone who had famously died of complications due to AIDS.

It is additionally important to note that “Feedback Song” was written and produced in English on an album that is otherwise written entirely in Portuguese. Although Russo claimed that he wrote the song in English because it dealt with a heavy topic, “Feedback Song” is far from the only song on that album that deals with a heavy theme.³²⁷ It is easy to postulate that, just as Russo produced *Stonewall* in English in order to exorcize a relationship gone awry, by singing in English about AIDS Russo wished to exorcize AIDS from his life and body, or at the very least to distance himself from it or keep it more private by limiting the song’s accessibility.

Russo’s stance on AIDS generally was contradictory, confusing, and wavering. Russo showed a clear affinity with Cazuzza and his public struggle, going so far as to say, “I have a very strong tie to Cazuzza...I may not seem like it, but I am very similar to Cazuzza.”³²⁸ In fact, on the day of Cazuzza’s death, *Legião* played a show dedicated to him.³²⁹ Yet Russo made a concerted effort to eschew participation in the fight against AIDS.³³⁰ His responsibility to be a mouthpiece for youth in a time of great desperation, like Cazuzza, prompted him to declare with a strong dose of cynicism, “I’m not into talking about floods, AIDS, government. I want to sing songs about

³²⁷ Renato Russo, *Renato Russo de A a Z: as idéias do líder da Legião Urbana* (Campo Grande: Letra Livre, 2000), 106; Alex Antunes, “Legião errante: a longa jornada do trio, da fábrica de hits até o neoprogressivo,” *Bizz* magazine, January 1992.

³²⁸ “Eu tenho uma superligação com o Cazuzza...eu não apareço tanto, mas sou muito parecido com o Cazuzza.” Renato Russo, Simone Assad, ed. *Renato Russo de A a Z: as idéias do líder da Legião Urbana*, 52. My translation.

³²⁹ Lucinha Araújo, *Cazuzza: só as mães são felizes* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 1997), 22.

³³⁰ Renato Russo, Simone Assad, ed. *Renato Russo de A a Z: as idéias do líder da Legião Urbana*, 49.

love, intimate ballads, cute little songs to sing together. I have given up on making music to save the world.”³³¹

AIDS in Russo's Personal Life

In interviews Russo advocated safe sex and condom use,³³² but when asked whether he had ever tested himself for HIV—an indispensable tool to prevent the spread of AIDS—Russo claimed, “I don’t talk about that. It’s scary, a terrible thing.”³³³ In the same interview, Russo’s discourse on AIDS seems to border on disgust, colored with intense fear, as he lamented the loss of the sexual revolution’s proclivity toward carefree sex, while simultaneously calling for healthy living and safe sex:

I am part of a generation that was caught in the middle of the way. I had to eroticize using condoms. If not, in the moment in which you’re looking for one, you’re not turned on anymore. So that people don’t have to use one, people started having sex without penetration, think that they weren’t going to catch AIDS. It all became a gay porno, you know? That whole deal with pulling out. But I don’t need this whole thing with the test and when I did it, it was...horrible to wait for the result. I have a check-up every year and I had discovered that I had Hepatitis B. The doctors asked me to do a test for AIDS. I did three exams until I was sure of the result, which came out positive in the first test and was a horror. You have to talk to your friends and everyone had to do an AIDS test...[the other two tests I did] came out negative...but I act as if I were seropositive. Totally safe sex. I’ve already been through so much. I always mistreated my organism. You know, it isn’t cool to say this, but the people who are really healthy are less likely to contract AIDS. I don’t do all the crazy stuff I used to do. And there are certain things that fall into an area of doubt, like oral sex.³³⁴

³³¹ “Não estou a fim de falar de enchentes, Aids, governo. Quero cantar canções de amor, baladas íntimas, musiquinhas pra cantar junto. Já desisti de fazer músicas para salvar o mundo.” Arthur Dapieve, *Renato Russo: o trovador solitário*, 99.

³³² *Ibid.*, 48.

³³³ “Não falo sobre isso. Dá medo, é uma coisa terrível.” Maria Helena Passos, “Roqueiro Brasileiro - Renato Russo,” *Marie Claire*, January, 1995.

³³⁴ “Faço parte de uma geração que foi pega no meio do caminho. Tive que erotizar o uso da camisinha. Senão, na hora de procurar por ela, você já broxou. Para não usá-la, o pessoal começou a fazer mais sexo sem penetração, achando que não pega Aids. Virou tudo filme de gay, sabe? Aquela coisa de gozar fora. Mas eu não preciso dessa

This quote stands in stark contradiction to his previous declarations that if he “were part of another minority and there were things that bothered [him]...[he] would speak” or that “When a person hides himself, he ends up falling into a sordid world.”³³⁵ Russo’s choice to remain silent underscores how painful AIDS was—emotionally, physically, and socially—in the mid-to-late 1990s. Although many groups were actively fighting the disease and its social consequences, activists and laypeople alike were vividly aware that PWAs faced the trauma of “*morte civil*” (“civic death”) as explained in Chapter Two. Although by the time of Russo’s death better treatment for PWAs meant that AIDS was no longer an imminent death sentence in the physical sense, the same cannot be said wholeheartedly for an end to “*morte civil*.”

In one way, therefore, Russo’s denial of his seropositivity had the effect of not only deceiving his public, but of also regressing to the old notion that AIDS=Death. Rumors spread in the media that Russo resigned to his death, refusing medication in the weeks preceding his passing.³³⁶ When the media asked Villa-Lobos if Russo was sick with AIDS, Villa-Lobos

coisa de teste e quando eu fiz foi... Foi horrível esperar o resultado. Faço check-up todo ano e descobri que estava com hepatite B. Os médicos me pediram para fazer teste de Aids. Fiz três exames até ter certeza do resultado, que deu positivo no primeiro exame e foi um horror...Você tem que falar com seus amigos e todos tiveram que fazer teste de Aids. Aí fiz outro...Repeti mais uma vez...E esses dois deram resultado negativo...Mas ajo como se fosse soropositivo. Sexo seguro total. Já passei por tanta coisa... E sempre maltratei muito meu organismo. Você sabe, não é legal falar isso, mas quem é realmente saudável tem menos possibilidade de contrair Aids. Não faço as mais loucuras que fazia antigamente. E tem certas coisas que caem na área da dúvida, como sexo oral, por exemplo.” Ibid. My translation. It is worth mentioning that HIV/AIDS can have an extremely long latency period; Russo had likely been infected with HIV long before he began using condoms regularly.

³³⁵ “Nunca fui santo,” *IstoÉ*, April 27, 1994; Renato Russo, Simone Assad, ed. *Renato Russo de A a Z: as idéias do líder da Legião Urbana*, 124. My translation.

³³⁶ Celina Côrtes, “Segredos de Renato Russo.” Even if Russo had refused medication, the effect might not have been altogether different than if he had accepted it: Russo had compromised his immune system for years even before he was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS through constant drug and alcohol abuse. Moreover, combination drug therapy was unavailable in Brazil until 1996, the year Russo died. Although it is difficult to know when (or if) Russo commenced HAART, it might not have been able to curb his imminent death for very long, given the late stage at which it was administered to him.

affirmed that Russo was depressed to the point of incapacitation but would not confirm or deny the rumors that Russo was dying.³³⁷

Renato Russo and Illness: a Caveat

When Renato Russo died in 1996, his fans entered a period of mourning.³³⁸ Although Russo had had a notoriously volatile relationship with the Brazilian press, his obituaries elegized his role as a leader during the Lost Generation period rather than criticizing his denial of having been HIV-positive.³³⁹ Russo's position as a mouthpiece for youth extended beyond his critiques of "*Geração Coca-Cola*" and insuperable inflation; he also served as an example of someone who courageously confronted his homosexuality in a public way.

While it is true that Russo publicly denied his seropositivity until his death, a caveat applies: although Russo never explicitly mentioned having AIDS in interviews or music, the topic of illness and death certainly did appear in his works, as exemplified in "Feedback Song for a Dying Friend." The strongest examples of illness are found on the album *A Tempestade (ou O Livro dos Dias)* ("The Storm (or the Book of Days)," the last album that was produced while Russo was alive. Russo sings in the song "*A vía láctea*" ("The Milky Way"), "Today sadness is not a passenger / Today I had a fever the whole afternoon / And when night falls / Every star will seem like a tear."³⁴⁰ While "*A vía láctea*" certainly speaks to Russo's disease and imminent death by referencing his own fever and depression, this is a clue to Russo's serostatus that could

³³⁷ "Novo Legião Urbana chega às lojas dia 20," *Folha de São Paulo*, September 2, 1996.

³³⁸ In fact, Russo's death had such an impact on some of his young fans that at least two teen suicides were attributed to depression over, or perhaps an emulation of, Russo's death. Miriam Chnaiderm, "Suicídios traem Russo," *Folha de São Paulo*, October 19, 1996.

³³⁹ See, for example, Roni Lima, "Poeta da década perdida," *Folha de São Paulo*, October 12, 1996; Luciano Almeida Filho, "A morte do poeta," *Jornal o Povo*, October 12, 1996; "O Rock brasileiro perde seu messias," *Jornal Zero Hora*, October 12, 1996.

³⁴⁰ "Hoje a tristeza / Não é passageira / Hoje fiquei com febre / A tarde inteira / E quando chegar a noite / Cada estrela / Parecerá uma lágrima." Renato Russo et al., "*A vía láctea*," *A Tempestade (ou O Livro dos Dias)*, 1996 EMI Brazil. My translation.

easily be missed by someone who would not know to look for it. Given that Russo's music consistently focused on problems affecting Brazil—an aforementioned song, "*Há Tempos*," which was produced seven years earlier, is an example of Russo's concern about dying that far preceded his own imminent death—it is easy to attribute a song like "*A vía láctea*" to overarching themes of disillusionment and demise in Brazilian society. The song "*Natália*," which belongs to the same album as that of "*A vía láctea*," laments the existence of "incurable diseases" in the same breath as "radioactive tragedies," suggesting that what concerns Russo is not his own diagnosis, but rather, troubles that affected society as a whole, especially given the tense climate of the "long *abertura*" in Brazil, of which Russo became a lasting symbol.³⁴¹

Renato Russo in Retrospect

Perhaps it is precisely because Russo broached such difficult topics in his music and public life that his legacy and reputation are considered to be extremely positive, given that fans and the media very well could have posthumously censured him for denying his seropositivity. In other words, Russo's constructive criticisms of Brazilian society and his function as role model to Brazilian youth have eclipsed the fact that he lied to his public about his illness. This claim finds support when it is examined in contrast to the experience of another HIV-positive Brazilian celebrity: Lauro Corona, whose story is related in Chapter Three.³⁴² While it is possible that the Brazilian media treated Russo better than they did Corona exactly because Corona's case had taught them not to exploit the topic of dying from AIDS—similar to the argument that Russo's coming out about his homosexuality did not generate much press because the Brazilian

³⁴¹ "...E de tragédias radioativas / De doenças incuráveis." Renato Russo et al., "Natália," *A Tempestade (ou O Livro dos Dias)*, 1996 EMI Brazil. My translation.

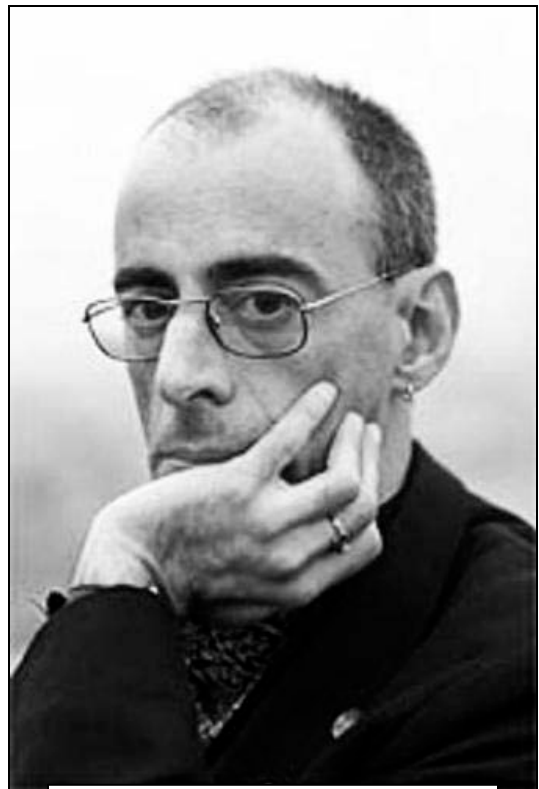
³⁴² Antônio Fausto Neto, *Mortes em derrapagem: os casos Corona e Cazuza no discurso da comunicação de massa* (Rio de Janeiro: Rio Fundo Editora, 1991).

media had learned not to exploit celebrities' personal matters after the *Veja* magazine debacle with Cazuza—a likelier explanation is simply that Russo was far more beloved than Corona was because he contributed much more to Brazilian society than Corona ever did. Furthermore, it is likely that Russo feared coming out about his seropositivity precisely because of how poorly both Cazuza and Corona were treated in the media.

Renato Russo proved that his inner complexities and fears of dealing with AIDS overshadowed whatever other public considerations he might have had in admitting to having the disease. Yet Renato Russo's denial of being HIV-positive should not be attributed only to anomalies in Russo's character. His choice to deny having HIV/AIDS speaks to larger social events. One explanation of his choice is simply that social phenomena take time to sink into public discourse: public discussions of homosexuality, which Russo felt comfortable mainstreaming, preceded AIDS's introduction into public discourse. And, of course, while both homosexuality and AIDS were taboo or feared to some extent, the critical difference between the two is that homosexuality does not kill; AIDS does. Ultimately, the things homosexuality represented in Brazil at the time—social and personal liberties finally coming to light in the wake of an oppressive military dictatorship—had a greater resonance with the public in the 1990s than AIDS did, even after Cazuza's public struggles with HIV/AIDS. Where Russo's criticisms of homophobia, in the spirit of *abertura*, aligned well with criticisms of multinational corporations, AIDS was not seen as a post-*abertura* legacy or right. Although AIDS may have embodied or mirrored the social ills affecting Brazil, this view would take time and careful politicization to cultivate.



Caio Fernando Abreu. Source:
vivaocudaanta.blogspot.com



Caio Fernando Abreu. Source:
vivaocudaanta.blogspot.com

Chapter Five: Caio Fernando Abreu: Exploring AIDS in the Gay Metropolis

Towards the end of his life, in the late months of 1995 and early into 1996, Caio Fernando Abreu devoted much of his time to gardening at his parents' home in Santiago, a small city in Brazil's southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul. For those who knew him best, this was hardly a surprise: Abreu had long harbored a passion for gardening—for roses in particular—and, oftentimes a bit reclusive, dreamed of returning to Santiago to die.³⁴³ Yet to an outsider, Abreu's quiet resignation to domesticity as he battled AIDS might have seemed uncharacteristic. After all, Abreu had earned international regard as a witty writer and journalist; he had traveled several times to Europe for book launches; and he had cavorted in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro's high society with the likes of Caetano Veloso and Cazuza. Yet Abreu was a man of humble roots who had nonetheless successfully opened a space in Brazilian literature for homoeroticism, AIDS, and ostracism, themes that Abreu himself called “non-literary.”³⁴⁴

In turning the “non-literary” literary, Abreu came not only to be considered a “gay writer,” but he also provided a strong voice for a whole generation that came to cope with AIDS, which was construed as another problem that plagued Brazil's metropolises. This chapter seeks to analyze some of Abreu's examinations of homosexuality and AIDS, both in his fiction and in his personal correspondences, in an effort to understand how they reflect trends in Brazilian urban culture during the “long *abertura*” of the 1980s and 1990s.³⁴⁵ By virtue of his profession

³⁴³ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

³⁴⁴ “Não-literários.” Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos: autobiografias & AIDS* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, 2002), 106. My translation.

³⁴⁵ Many of Abreu's personal correspondences—he often wrote up to five or six letters per day—were collected in an anthology called *Cartas* by Italo Moriconi.

Abreu, compared to Cazuzo and Renato Russo, was not as present in the media.³⁴⁶ His battle with HIV/AIDS, therefore, did not cause a public uproar in the same way that Cazuzo's admission to seropositivity and Russo's suspected serostatus did, even though Abreu drew much inspiration from the example of Cazuzo. What Abreu's writings on homosexuality and AIDS did, however, was show definitively that these "non-literary" topics were worth discussing even among Brazil's intellectual elite. Similar to Susan Sontag in the United States, Abreu's critical attention to these heretofore unsavory themes gave them greater exposure among Abreu's readers, who spanned continents.³⁴⁷

Before delving into the story of Abreu's life, it is first necessary to discuss some of the sources used for this chapter. In addition to Abreu's own written work—including books, stories, and personal correspondences—and scholarly analyses of these works, a significant portion of this chapter relies on biographical information from writer Jeanne Callegari's *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*. Yet according to Abreu's longtime friend and roommate Jacqueline Cantore, who has supplied a great deal of information for this chapter, Callegari's biography has met with some resistance and controversy in Brazil.³⁴⁸ Cantore claims that Callegari did not interview many of the most key figures in Abreu's life, which has rendered the portrayal of Abreu's life incomplete. I have, nevertheless, chosen to cite Callegari's source in

³⁴⁶ It should be noted, however, that Abreu has been likened to a kind of "Cazuzo of literature" with regards to his openness about AIDS. Marcelo Pen, "Quem tem medo de Caio F.?" in Caio Fernando Abreu, *Caio 3D: o essencial de década de 1990* (Rio de Janeiro: AGIR, 2002), 10.

³⁴⁷ See, for example, Susan Sontag, *The Way We Live Now* (New York: Noonday Press, 2001); Susan Sontag, *Illness and Its Metaphors, AIDS and its Metaphors* (New York: Picador USA, 2001). Abreu is, for example, one of the very few Latin American writers—and the only one in the Portuguese language—to be featured in *The Penguin Book of International Gay Writing*, edited by Mark Mitchell (1996) (Fernando Arenas, *Utopias of Otherness: Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 48). He has also inspired an entire anthology of short stories dedicated to him: Paulo de Tarso Riccardi, *Caio de amores: contos* (Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1996). His work has also been featured in *Urban Voices: Contemporary Short Stories from Brazil*, ed. Cristina Ferreira Pinto (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1999) and the *Oxford Anthology of the Brazilian Short Story*, ed. K. David Jackson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

³⁴⁸ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

this chapter for purely verifiable information on Abreu's life, such as the dates of certain events in his life, general biographical information, and cited interviews.

Caio Fernando Abreu: Early Days

Born in 1948 in Santiago do Boquerião, Rio Grande do Sul to Zaél and Nair Abreu, Caio Fernando Loureiro de Abreu was the eldest of five children in a lower middle class family. From the outset, Abreu was different from the others. Instead of playing the “masculine” pastime of soccer, he would invent games of his own. He was constantly immersed in books and had a temperament that swung violently from dark depressions to periods of endless joy.³⁴⁹ A boy of exceptional intelligence, he moved to Rio Grande do Sul's capital, Porto Alegre, at age fifteen to study at a top high school. This first taste of a world outside of Santiago probably supplied Abreu with the wanderlust that would last him a lifetime. Abreu would shuttle among Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Porto Alegre, and Europe for his entire life, to finally end up in his parent's house in his last months.

As a teenager, Abreu had already begun to write and publish stories. His love for words, diction, and grammar guided his choice to enroll at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, where he studied literature.³⁵⁰ In 1967, however, *Realidade* (“Reality”) magazine was set to release a new magazine, *Veja* (“Look”), and Abreu left his degree behind to jump at the opportunity to work on the launch.³⁵¹ Thus began Abreu's career in journalism. By the end of his life, he would have worked in dozens of publications, most notably *O Estado de São Paulo* (“The State of São Paulo”) and *Zero Hora* (“Hour Zero”), where he had running columns in the

³⁴⁹ Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável* (Rio de Janeiro: Seoman, 2008), 23.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 34.

³⁵¹ *Veja* magazine is the same one mentioned in Chapter Three on Cazusa.

early 1990s. All the while, Abreu wrote short stories and works of fiction. His first novel, *Limite branco* (“White limit”), was published in 1971.

By the late 1960s Abreu had fallen into a hippie lifestyle, complete with drug use and communal living, inspired by his tropicalist idols. Like them, Abreu also began to participate in movements dedicated to resisting the military dictatorship in surreptitious meetings and began running with a subversive crowd.³⁵² According to Cantore, Abreu and the censors clashed because he was a journalist, “and in the 60s with the *ditadura* [military dictatorship] everyone was persecuted if you had some kind of expression, any cultural expression.”³⁵³ In 1968 Abreu was put under watch by DOPS (*Departamento de Ordem Política e Social* – The Department for Political and Social Order), a repressive policing branch of the military regime. To escape the constant scrutiny of DOPS, Abreu sought refuge at a friend’s country estate and left shortly thereafter for self-exile in Europe for a year. During this time, he wrote metaphorically about the asphyxiating climate of repression under the dictatorship in several short stories, which were compiled in his 1975 book called *O ovo apunhalado* (“The stabbed egg”).³⁵⁴ Meanwhile, Abreu flitted from job to job, all the while writing stories and letters to family and friends. It was not until 1983, however, that Abreu experienced a big literary breakthrough with the publication of a collection of short stories called *Morangos mofados* (“Moldy strawberries”).

With *Morangos mofados*, Abreu turned into an “involuntary guru of a generation and...a respected writer, both critically and publicly.”³⁵⁵ From this period onward, accounts of Abreu

³⁵² It is noteworthy that Abreu, unlike Cazuzu or Russo, was an adult throughout all of the military dictatorship and was the only one of the three who had any direct contact with insurgency. He was arrested twice, once in 1968 and once in 1975, for trumped-up drug charges and for connection to other anti-military insurgents. Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*, 75.

³⁵³ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

³⁵⁴ Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*, 42-70.

³⁵⁵ “Como guru involuntário de uma geração e...como escrito respeitado, sucesso de crítica e pública.” *Ibid.*, 99. My translation. It is noteworthy that Abreu, like Cazuzu and Renato Russo, strongly resisted any responsibility of being a mouthpiece for a generation. Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos*, 142.

center on his literary acclaim and how he came to be regarded as one of Brazil's first "gay writers," both because he engaged directly with gay over- and undertones and themes in his literature, but also because he was perhaps the first author ever to give substantial space in his work to AIDS. Since AIDS in the 1980s connoted homosexuality and vice-versa, Abreu's literature satisfied the requisites of exploring both AIDS and gay life.³⁵⁶ Abreu, however, resisted the label of a "gay writer," claiming that no such thing could exist, in the same way that it would be ludicrous to label someone a "straight writer."³⁵⁷ In order to better understand Abreu's literature, it is important to comprehend how he constructed his own sexuality.

Negotiations of Sexuality and AIDS in Life and in Literature

At the launch of *Limite branco* in 1971, Abreu met Vera Antoun, a fourteen-year-old young woman with whom he struck a great friendship.³⁵⁸ Soon thereafter their friendship blossomed into love, and they began to date seriously. When Abreu returned to Europe in 1973, he and Vera exchanged letters across a great distance, in which they dreamt about getting married and having children. Abreu, however, terminated the relationship, claiming that Vera had projected unto their relationship unrealistic possibilities, waiting for him to return from Europe like someone would wait for "salvation."³⁵⁹ Vera was not his only female lover. Abreu was forever questing for a great love, always pursuing a passion, sometimes men and sometimes women. Because Abreu was popular, famous, and magnetic, a group of young people gravitated towards him at all times. One of his most damning tendencies, according to Cantore, was that

³⁵⁶ Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos*, 108-109.

³⁵⁷ Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*, 158; Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Histórias positivas: a literatura (des)construindo a AIDS* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record, 1997), 43; Marcelo Secron Bessa, "'Quero brincar livre nos campos do Senhor': Uma entrevista com Caio Fernando Abreu," *PaLavra* 7-15, 1997, 12.

³⁵⁸ Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*, 57-58.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 68.

Abreu often fell in love with straight men, always hoping that there was potential to have a relationship with them.³⁶⁰ Two of his first sexual experiences, which he related in an interview given to *Marie Claire* in 1995, were with both a man and a woman. The affair with the man was in Porto Alegre when he was sixteen years old. He related that the man “threw him on the bed, completely without romance...He made me touch his penis, and I ran away.”³⁶¹ The affair with the woman was in São Paulo when Abreu was nineteen years old. Echoing a similar storyline, he claimed that this woman “threw [him] on the bed and raped [him].” This time, however, “it was great.”³⁶² These transient affairs, however, would never compare to Abreu’s desire for a fulfilling romance, a true love. He found this dream realized in Ivan Mattos, an actor from Porto Alegre who would become a model for the character Pedro in the book *Onde andar Dulce Veiga?* (“Whatever happened to Dulce Veiga?”), published in Brazil in 1990 and published in English in 2001.

Abreu maintained that he did not believe in homosexuality or heterosexuality; he believed in sexuality, pure and simple.³⁶³ Similar to Cazuzza and Russo’s distaste for “ghettos,” gay or otherwise, Abreu claimed to prefer to frequent spaces that allowed free passage for both gay and straight people.³⁶⁴ This tendency to bridge the world between heterosexual and homosexual is exemplified in Abreu’s first contact with AIDS. Abreu recounted,

³⁶⁰ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

³⁶¹ “Me jogou em cima da cama, completamente sem romantismo...Me fez segurar o pau dele e eu saı correndo.” Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventrio de um escritor irremedivel*, 97. My translation.

³⁶² “Me jogou na cama e me estuprou...Foi timo.” *Ibid.*, 111. My translation.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 112. According to authors Susan Canty Quinlan and Fernando Arenas, this tendency is expressed in his work also: “Sexuality and gender identity categories appear as highly unstable sites of signification in Caio Fernando Abreu’s fictional world, where fixed notions of hetero-, bi-, or homosexuality are constantly put into question.” Susan Canty Quinlan and Fernando Arenas, *Lusosex: Gender and Sexuality in the Portuguese-Speaking World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 243.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 141. Jacqueline Cantore, however, believes that Abreu’s world was definitively comprised of gay men. Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

The first time I heard of AIDS was in 1981.³⁶⁵ I was living in a hotel in Santa Teresa, in Rio de Janeiro, and one day I heard on TV the news of the death of Markito [a renowned Brazilian costume designer, whose death in New York City is often measured as the beginning of the epidemic in Brazilians], victim of a strange illness that was killing homosexuals in the United States. In those days I had a girlfriend named Cacaia. We were so impacted [by the news] that we made a dossier on AIDS from all the news published in newspapers. But for me it was something improbable, close to science fiction that happened in a strange country.³⁶⁶

It is noteworthy that Abreu, who shared this emotional experience with a girlfriend, became very sensitized to and hyperaware of AIDS from such an early stage, even creating a dossier on AIDS. In 1983, the very beginning of the epidemic in Brazil, few Brazilians were paying any serious attention to AIDS.³⁶⁷ In fact, some of the only people who were closely following AIDS in the news were those who had a stake in the disease, which is to say, gay men. Abreu had a morbid fascination with AIDS because of his connection with homosexuality, even though he was dating a woman at the time. Abreu's homo-, bi- or pansexuality motivated his close tracking of the epidemic's progression and from early on induced his sense of paranoia that he, too, would eventually die of AIDS.³⁶⁸ This notion, of course, was also fueled by the fact that many of Abreu's close friends would die of complications due to AIDS. One such person was Cazuza, whose sickness and death affected Abreu in his personal life and work.³⁶⁹ According to Cantore, however, Abreu was likely not any more influenced by Cazuza's death than he was by

³⁶⁵ Markito actually died in 1983, not in 1981.

³⁶⁶ “A primeira vez em que ouvi falar em AIDS foi em 1981. Morava num hotel em Santa Teresa, no Rio de Janeiro, e certo dia escutei na televisão a notícia da morte do costureiro Marquito [*sic*], vítima de uma doença estranha que estaria matando homossexuais nos Estados Unidos. Na época, tinha uma namorada chamada Cacaia. Ficamos tão impressionados que fizemos um dossiê sobre AIDS com as notícias que saíam nos jornais. Mas para mim era algo improvável, próximo à ficção científica, que acontecia em um país estranho.” Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos*, 112. My translation.

³⁶⁷ Diego Armus, *Disease in the History of Modern Latin America: From Malaria to AIDS* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 297.

³⁶⁸ See, for example, Caio Fernando Abreu and Italo Moriconi, *Cartas* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, 2002), 54-60, 106; Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

³⁶⁹ Caio Fernando Abreu and Italo Moriconi, *Cartas*, 160-163. It is noteworthy that Cazuza's mother, Lucinha Araujo, aided Abreu in procuring AZT, a popular antiretroviral drug for HIV/AIDS, after he had been diagnosed. See *Ibid.*, 220-227.

any of his other friends' deaths. What differed with Cazuzu's death was the national outpouring of grief seen in Brazil at the passing of a talented, young, funny, and charismatic artist.³⁷⁰

Abreu tackled AIDS in his work from a very early stage, close to a full decade before he himself was diagnosed as HIV-positive.³⁷¹ Thus, Abreu's focus on homosexuality and AIDS in his literature caused others to construct him as gay (and possibly HIV-positive) in real life. In one explanation of Abreu's construction as a "gay writer," author Fernando Arenas claims, "In spite of [Abreu's] critical stance with regard to monolithic categories such as 'gay,' 'bisexual,' or 'heterosexual'; his antagonism toward the idea of being ghettoized as a 'gay writer'; and his much stronger preference for a notion of plural, and interchangeable sexualities, Caio Fernando Abreu's cultural and political contributions are inevitably of great interest to queer communities inside and outside of Brazil."³⁷²

Moreover, readers' jump from Abreu's fictitious world to his real life is not unwarranted: much of Abreu's literature borrows themes and stories from his own life. In fact, according to Cantore, Abreu "was a fictional writer, so he had to live fiction... he had to go through the pain to be able to write."³⁷³ Moreover, those who read his short stories and novels were also apt to have read his columns in newspapers at the same time, thereby sharing not only in his fiction but also in his reality. When asked in an interview in 1995, for example, if Abreu would ever write an autobiography, Abreu retorted, "I already have. My life is in my books. There aren't in my

³⁷⁰ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

³⁷¹ For a long time, Abreu refused to get tested for HIV even though he was paranoid that he was HIV-positive. Abreu was in denial about his serostatus, believing that the psychological battle against AIDS was as important, if not more important, than the physical battle. Once he was declared HIV-positive, Abreu believed that he would die. Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

³⁷² Fernando Arenas, *Utopias of Otherness: Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil*, 43.

³⁷³ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

history many facts beyond those in my work, because the starting point was always too personal.”³⁷⁴

According to author and literary critic Marcelo Secron Bessa, after the publication of Abreu’s very well-respected book *Triângulo das águas* (“Triangle of waters,” winner of the Jabuti prize for literature in Brazil) in 1983, AIDS becomes the “*leitmotiv* of [Abreu’s] books.”³⁷⁵ The most striking example in *Triângulo das águas* is the novella *Pela noite* (“Through the night”), in which AIDS is presented as a running theme of the story, both through discreet talk between the two protagonists and as a disease that is mentioned outright.³⁷⁶ Marcelo Secron Bessa, however, emphasizes that Abreu eschews the actual word “AIDS” more often than not, instead leading the readers to understand that characters in his stories have AIDS by way of their symptoms and/or by way of the fact that they are paranoid about contracting or already having AIDS.³⁷⁷

A good example of Abreu’s tendency to have readers interpolate AIDS in his work is found in the short story “*Noites de Santa Tereza*” (“Nights of Santa Tereza”) published in 1995 in the book *Ovelhas negras* (“Black sheep”). In it, the narrator explains, “I smoke way too much, I have some suspicious fevers, certain night sweats, much beyond this endless summer. Some [swollen] lymph nodes, some weakness, some thrush in the mouth, could it be?”³⁷⁸ All of these ailments are, of course, symptomatic of HIV/AIDS. The narrator, moreover, is highly aware that

³⁷⁴ ““Eu já fiz. Minha vida está nos meus livros. Não há na minha história muitos fatos externos à obra que escrevi, porque o ponto de partida sempre foi pessoal demais.”” Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos*, 131. My translation. In fact, because Abreu’s personal life was so closely kneaded into his fiction, it would likely have been difficult for him not to have come out publicly about being HIV-positive.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 108. My translation.

³⁷⁶ For extensive analysis of *Pela noite*, see Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Histórias positivas*, 51-76.

³⁷⁷ Secron Bessa argues that Abreu avoided using the acronym “AIDS” because it raised too many images, preconceptions, and prejudice. He preferred to have readers come up with their own conceptions of AIDS based on the characters, not based on what they had interpreted from the media. Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos*, 113-114.

³⁷⁸ “Fumo além da conta, tenho umas febres suspeitas, certos suores à noite, muito além deste verão sem fim. Uns gânglios, umas fraquezas, sapinhos na boca, será?” Caio Fernando Abreu, “Noites de Santa Tereza,” in *Ovelhas negras, de 1962 a 1995* (Porto Alegre: Editora Sulina, 1995), 152-153. My translation.

she is likely HIV-positive, yet she continues wondering whether she is sick, examining her body instead of seeking a definitive diagnosis. This is similar to how Abreu coped with his illness. Abreu worried for years that he was HIV-positive. He would consult compulsively with his friends, watching closely for all of the signs of immunodeficiency, until he finally got tested late into the course of his disease, in 1994.³⁷⁹

“*Pela noite*” and “*Noites de Santa Tereza*” are good entry points into an analysis of Abreu’s work, not only because they offer important themes of (homo)sexuality and AIDS, but also because they both have the word “night” in their titles, which indicates Abreu’s preference to explore the dark, the underworld, and the hidden. This thesis, however, does not purport to offer formal literary criticism of Abreu’s works, nor a complete record of all his stories that deal—overtly or covertly—with homosexuality and/or AIDS. Yet it would nonetheless be negligent not to look closely at some of his more important depictions of gay life, AIDS, and how the two relate not only to each other, but also how they are interwoven with greater general themes in Brazilian history. In order to best facilitate this discussion, this chapter splits Abreu’s approaches to dealing with AIDS into three categories: 1) AIDS as the termination of the sexual revolution; 2) AIDS as an expression of Abreu’s personal struggle; and 3) AIDS as apocalypse (with, nevertheless, a promise of hope).

AIDS as the Termination of the Sexual Revolution

Before delving into Abreu’s work, it is first important to contextualize it. Abreu, considered by many literary critics to be one of the most important Brazilian authors in the last

³⁷⁹ Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*, 166; Caio Fernando Abreu and Italo Moriconi, *Cartas* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, 2002), 309-310.

twenty years,³⁸⁰ mobilized characters in his stories around themes that are specific to the struggles of people in his *abertura* generation in Brazil's urban centers.³⁸¹ Abreu is undoubtedly a writer of Brazil's "long *abertura*" period. Abreu was also a writer who spoke deeply to Brazil's youth. According to Cantore, Abreu, much like Cazuza and Renato Russo, "could put in words that search that you have when you're a teenager, and he would verbalize it. [You would say, upon reading his work,] yes, that's it! That anguish, that need to express yourself, all this was in words."³⁸² His writing, though it reflects the angst and anxieties of this period, appealed to a very different audience from that of Cazuza or Russo. Abreu, who often wrote in a dense, obscure style, was attractive to Brazil's educated classes. In addition, because of the difference between Cazuza and Russo's medium (songs) and Abreu's (stories), Abreu's critiques and explorations of Brazilian society are simultaneously less accessible but more detailed. According to Arenas,

Caio Fernando Abreu belonged to the generation that believed or engaged in various utopian causes such as Marxist revolution, sexual liberation, and drug experimentation...the exhaustion of the counterculture, which, in the case of Brazil, had the particular distinction of being repressed by the authoritarian and ultra-nationalistic regime of the late 1960s and early 1970s and, on the other hand, by the very contemporary and ubiquitous threat of AIDS, which has dramatically altered the world's relationship to sex for many years to come. The result has been a generalized sense of loss, disorientation, and pessimism, acutely perceived by the author, which is the product not only of the contemporary global landscape, but also of a national historical trajectory that has seen many years of authoritarian rule (1964-1984), with all of its well-known political and economic consequences, and an ensuing decade of great insecurity and instability, wrought with frustrated collective dreams, persistently wide socioeconomic inequities, and unlikely saviors [such as Tancredo Neves].³⁸³

³⁸⁰ Fernando Arenas, *Utopias of Otherness: Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 43.

³⁸¹ In this regard his work is similar to that of *Legião Urbana*. One notable exception is Abreu's novella *Bien loin de Marienbad* (*Bem longe de Marienbad* – So far from Marienbad), which was written in France, initially published in French in 1994, and details a character's experience in Northern Europe.

³⁸² Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

³⁸³ Fernando Arenas, *Utopias of Otherness: Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil*, 44.

AIDS, for Abreu, was the encapsulation not only of urban despair and demise and a reflection of national ills, but also of the end of the sexual revolution, of which Abreu had been a devotee during his hippie phase in the late 1960s.³⁸⁴ Sexuality in the “long *abertura*” was less playful and open than the sexual liberation movement that also took place during the dictatorship. This notion manifests most notably in Abreu’s short story “*Dama da noite*” (“Queen of the night”) in his 1988 book *Os dragões não conhecem o paraíso* (published in the United Kingdom in 1990 as “Dragons”). The queen of the night—of ambiguous gender—soliloquizes (ostensibly in conversation to a younger man) about the loss of sexual freedom that occurred as a result of the advent of AIDS:

You haven’t seen anything, you haven’t even seen love. How old are you, twenty? You look like twelve. You were born clutching a condom, scared to death of catching AIDS. The deadly virus, pal, the love virus. You took it up the bum, you screwed some arse, and that’s it—total paranoia. A week later a spot appears on your face and it’s panic stations, Emilio Ribas Hospital here we come. The shits, a dry cough, swellings all over. Oh boy, they’ve really screwed up your little mind, right? You can’t even kiss on the mouth without getting scared shitless. You read somewhere it’s passed on from saliva. You can’t even stroke someone’s damp chest without holding on to your arse. You read somewhere it’s passed on from sweat...but you get it on the telly too, the whole time—love kills love kills love kills.³⁸⁵ You can even catch it being next to someone, drinking out of the same glass. Have you ever thought whether I had it? Me, who’s had it away with half the town and what’s more I love queers.

I’m the queen of the night who’s going to contaminate you with her poisonous deadly perfume. I’m the carnivorous nocturnal flower who’s going to make you dizzy and drag you to the bottom of her putrid garden. I’m the cursed queen who’s mercilessly going to pollute you and infect your blood with every kind of virus. Beware of me—I’m the deadly queen. Have you ever licked a woman’s cunt? Of course not, I know, it might be fatal. Or a man’s cock, fatal too. Have you ever smelt that damp smell people have in their crutch [sic] when they take their clothes off?...You were born

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 46.

³⁸⁵ This is likely a reference to the 1986 movie *Sid and Nancy* (originally entitled *Love Kills*) directed by Alex Cox. Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos: autobiografias & AIDS*, 121.

wearing a mask. You were born forbidden to touch another person's body.³⁸⁶

In a different twist on this same theme, Abreu expresses how, with the advent of AIDS, sexual liberation has become a crime punishable by death. In his short story “The Little Red Shoes” (“*Sapatinhos vermelhos*” in the Brazilian version), the protagonist is a middle-aged woman who, in a rush of sexual desire, orchestrates an orgy with three men. She is feeling youthful and desirable during the foursome until the ultimate paragraph of the story relates how the sex has had damaging effects. In what is meant to suggest a diagnosis or sign of HIV—or possibly another sexually transmitted illness (STI), although Abreu does not address STIs other than HIV/AIDS in his other works—the last line of the story reads, “then the doctor prodded her groin and later informed her there was something wrong.”³⁸⁷

Abreu, besides writing fiction and personal correspondence, also published countless *crônicas* (translated as “chronicles” or simply as “newspaper columns”) in various newspapers. One of his most striking *crônicas* is entitled, “*As quatro irmãs (psicoantropologia fake)*” (“The four sisters (fake psychoanthropology)”), which is featured in *Caio 3D*, a retrospective of his work. “*As quatro irmãs*” is a parable of four fictitious sisters, who represent gay men and their difficulty in loving—at all, or with the proper precautions—in the age of AIDS. He personifies four different kinds of attitudes towards AIDS through the personalities of the four sisters. Jacira is gay, proud to be gay, and everyone knows she is gay.³⁸⁸ Telma is gay but is extremely unhappy about, and in denial of, her homosexuality. Irma is gay, and everyone knows she is gay except for herself; the only time Irma has gay sex is when she is drunk and too unaware to

³⁸⁶ Caio Fernando Abreu, “Queen of the Night,” in *Dragons* (London: Boulevard, 1990), 84-85.

³⁸⁷ Caio Fernando Abreu, “The Little Red Shoes,” in *Dragons*, 69.

³⁸⁸ Abreu constantly invented new vocabulary and slang, which he would include in his *crônicas*. For Abreu and his friends, the word “jacira” substituted for the word “gay.” Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

realize what she is doing. Irene is gay, knows she is gay, but does not make a show of it. When it comes to dealing with HIV/AIDS, the attitudes of the sisters vary accordingly. Jaciras are very careful to protect themselves. Irenes are so compulsive about having safe sex that some of them do not have sex at all anymore. Irmãs, because they have gay sex only when they are drunk, are extremely careless and hardly ever protect themselves. Telmas are impulsive and angry, and thus never protect themselves.

Thus, Abreu constructs a problem of AIDS among gay men, what he viewed as the end of the sexual revolution. Many gay men were too paranoid to have sex, but the situation was doomed for those who were still willing and desirous: they were either too careless themselves or fell victim to partners who were too careless.³⁸⁹ What is most noteworthy in Abreu's treatment of AIDS as the end of Brazil's sexual revolution is how the "long *abertura*" crushed the dreams and hopes that Brazilians had long harbored in light of the grim mood of the military dictatorship. In this way, during the military dictatorship, Brazilians had the luxury to hope that something better would come; during the "long *abertura*," by contrast, Brazilians felt that looking forward would be futile.

AIDS as an Expression of Abreu's Personal Struggle

Unlike "*As quatro irmãs*" and other *crônicas*, more often than not Abreu portrays AIDS through realistic imagery that mirrors his life and draws from the lives around his. In "Linda, uma história horrível" (translated as "Beauty" in the British edition of *Os dragões não conhecem o paraíso*, 1990), the protagonist is a middle-aged man who is dying from complications due to AIDS. He goes to visit his elderly mother who, like him, is dying, though not of AIDS. It is noteworthy first to mention that Abreu opens the story with lyrics from Cazuza's smash hit song

³⁸⁹ Caio Fernando Abreu, *Caio 3D: o essencial de década de 1990* (Rio de Janeiro: AGIR, 2005), 141-145.

“*Só as mães são felizes*” (“Only mothers are happy”), thereby from the outset drawing the imagery of Cazuzu’s battle with AIDS into the story.³⁹⁰ When the man enters his mother’s house, the mother voices concern for her son’s health:

“‘You look thinner,’ she observed. She seemed concerned. ‘Much thinner.’
‘It’s my hair,’ he said. He ran his hand over his almost shaven head.
‘And this three-day-old beard.’
‘You’ve lost some hair, son.’
‘It’s my age. Almost forty.’ He put out his cigarette, and coughed.
‘And that rotten cough?’
‘Cigarettes, mother. Air pollution.’”³⁹¹

This exchange is representative of the lengths to which many HIV-positive people went in order to conceal their illness. Wasting, lung infection, and thinning hair are all symptomatic of HIV/AIDS or treatments for HIV/AIDS.³⁹² The middle-aged protagonist, moreover, is someone who easily resembles Abreu. This connection becomes clearer when, a few pages later, the protagonist strokes purple marks on his chest, which the reader is supposed to recognize as the purplish spots of Kaposi’s Sarcoma (KS), a common cancerous opportunistic infection of advanced HIV/AIDS, especially among gay men in the Western Hemisphere.³⁹³ The KS on the

³⁹⁰ Caio Fernando Abreu admitted without shame that he drew more inspiration from Cazuzu than he did from many other famous Brazilian authors. Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos: autobiografias & AIDS*, 106. According to Cantore, however, Abreu was far more influenced by other authors and musicians than he was by Cazuzu. Cantore maintains that Abreu treated Cazuzu and references to him as something like the “flavor of the week.” In supporting Cantore’s claim, it is noteworthy to mention that *Linda* was published in the same year of Cazuzu’s death, 1990. Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

³⁹¹ Caio Fernando Abreu, “Beauty,” in *Dragons* (London: Boulevard, 1990), 6.

³⁹² It is noteworthy to recall from Chapter Three that before Cazuzu admitted to being HIV-positive, he made similar excuses about losing hair due to old age and similarly accused Lauro Corona of being HIV-positive by citing Corona’s thinning hair as a trademark sign. It is even possible that Abreu, who cited Cazuzu in his epigraph, was further echoing Cazuzu in this scene.

³⁹³ Towards the end of his life, Abreu suffered from Kaposi’s Sarcoma, most noticeably on the tip of his nose. Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*, insert page 8. Abreu’s most explicit work related to KS was *O homem e a mancha* (*The man and the mark*), a title of a play that obviously refers to the 1965 Dale Wasserman musical *Man of La Mancha*. According to Secron Bessa, despite the play having been released six months before Abreu’s diagnosis, many people identified the Homem da Mancha (Man of the Mancha) as Abreu’s alter ego (Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos: autobiografias & AIDS*, 135). For more information on the presence of physical marks in Abreu’s work, see Victor Hugo Adler Pereira, “Marcas no corpo, no texto e na cena de Caio Fernando” in *A escrita de Adé: perspectivas teóricas dos estudos gays e lésbic@s no Brasil*, ed. Rick García Wilton Santos (São Paulo: Xamã, 2002).

protagonist's chest mirrors the devolution of other things in his life: the purple marks on his chest that match the color of the fading carpet and the purple spots that he notices on his mother's dog.³⁹⁴ Indeed, according to author Karl Posso, the relationship between Abreu's illness and that of his characters is very strong:

Caio Fernando Abreu's fictional and nonfictional production (between 1988 and 1995)—directly and indirectly—mirrors the various stages the author went through in coping with AIDS, as it affected him personally, as well as the world around him. Given what is known about the progression of the disease within the body, HIV/AIDS has been characterized in terms of stages since the beginning of the epidemic (Sontag). In Abreu's fiction we witness...first the marks of the disease on the body's surface [as in the Kaposi's Sarcoma in "Beauty"].³⁹⁵

Abreu's insertion of his struggle with AIDS and his relationship to homosexuality into his work finds the strongest support in one of his major books, *Onde andar Dulce Veiga?* Because, however, *Onde andar* fits equally well into the third category of Abreu's work—"AIDS as apocalypse (with, nevertheless, a promise of hope)"—it will instead be explored in the following section.

AIDS as Apocalypse (with, Nevertheless, a Promise of Hope)

AIDS in Abreu's work is also often presented as total calamity, or "as one of the major facets of contemporary life's insanity, a tragically vivid metaphor of the reality of a contaminated planet...[Abreu] does not glorify the fact of being a person with AIDS, nor does he

³⁹⁴ Caio Fernando Abreu, "Beauty," in *Dragons* (London: Boulevard, 1990), 10-11.

³⁹⁵ Susan Canty Quinlan and Fernando Arenas, *Lusosex: Gender and Sexuality in the Portuguese-Speaking World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 239. What Quinlan and Arenas refer to in their citation of Susan Sontag is that AIDS has traditionally been divided into four stages. Stage One is the asymptomatic stage. Stage Two generally involves minor manifestations, such as upper respiratory tract infections. Stage Three includes chronic ailments, such as diarrhea and bacterial infections. Stage Four includes ailments such as thrush, Kaposi's Sarcoma, toxoplasmosis, and cryptococcosis. "AIDS in the International Perspective," Patricia Symonds, Lecture, Brown University, 9 September, 2008.

consider it a heroic or divine experience.”³⁹⁶ Abreu’s treatment of AIDS as apocalyptic in nature finds its best manifestation in *Onde andar Dulce Veiga*, which, according to author Fernando Arenas, is “set against the backdrop of an apocalyptic So Paulo, the novel is set in a city that is falling to pieces, terminally ill.”³⁹⁷ *Onde andar* is the story of a nameless, middle-aged narrator-journalist (thus strongly resembling Abreu) who finds himself in pursuit of Dulce Veiga, a beautiful singer who had disappeared twenty years earlier. Along the way, the narrator meets Mrcia Fellatio, Dulce’s daughter and the lead singer of a band called The Toothed Vaginas. The narrator’s search for Dulce Veiga mirrors his search for himself: he is in love with a man named Pedro (modeled on Abreu’s real life love Ivan Mattos) who, too, has disappeared. Readers later find out that Pedro, Mrcia, Mrcia’s dead lover caro, possibly Mrcia’s manager, and the narrator are all infected with HIV/AIDS.³⁹⁸

Besides the explicitly sexual and AIDS-related nature of the storylines aforementioned, *Onde andar* approaches the subjects of AIDS and (homo)sexuality in myriad subtle ways. For readers in the know, some of the most poignant examples of AIDS’s quiet presence in the novel are found in references to Cazuz. In a cab, the narrator hears one of Cazuz’s songs on the radio;³⁹⁹ in one scene in which the narrator imagines Mrcia’s wake, he imagines the Toothed Vaginas singing the lyric “My Heroes Died from an Overdose,” which is a reference to the chorus of Cazuz’s song “*Ideologia*”;⁴⁰⁰ and when the narrator finally meets Dulce Veiga in a

³⁹⁶ Susan Canty Quinlan and Fernando Arenas, *Lusosex: Gender and Sexuality in the Portuguese-Speaking World*, 238. As mentioned in Chapter Three, there are some people—most notably “bug chasers”—who, in stark contrast to Abreu, consider AIDS to be a transformative and elucidating experience.

³⁹⁷ Fernando Arenas, *Utopias of Otherness: Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil*, 49.

³⁹⁸ In a note that Pedro leaves for the narrator, he writes, “*Don’t try to find me. Forget me, forgive me. I think I’ve been infected and I don’t want to kill you with my love,*” which is another clear example of Abreu’s preoccupation with AIDS having ended the sexual revolution and people’s capacity to love, as exemplified in *Dama da Noite*. Caio Fernando Abreu, *Whatever happened to Dulce Veiga?* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 148.

³⁹⁹ Caio Fernando Abreu, *Whatever happened to Dulce Veiga?*, 16.

⁴⁰⁰ “*Meus herois morreram de overdose.*” *Ibid.*, 124. My translation.

small town in the Northeast of Brazil, she has a cat named Cazuza, whom the narrator takes with him as a promise of faith in his own future.⁴⁰¹

The entire tone of *Onde andar * is one of absolute chaos. After all, “Caio believed the disease to be but one of the many mosaics of contemporary madness and HIV but one form of human contamination.”⁴⁰² Dulce is missing, Pedro is missing (and probably deceased), and M rcia goes missing for a time. S o Paulo is a lonely city of cold concrete. The narrator cannot figure out or come to terms with his own sexuality. Dulce’s ex-lover, Saul, is a heroin addict and transvestite who has gone crazy from torture he underwent as a communist under the military dictatorship. Saul, in fact, serves as a representative of someone ensnared by the drug culture of the 1980s and 90s, in which new drugs—such as cocaine and heroin—were ubiquitous and had replaced the “softer” drugs of the 1960s.⁴⁰³ These terrible consequences of military dictatorship and the unraveling of Brazilian society are all symptomatic of the “long *abertura*,” the link of simultaneous desperation and hope and decay and renewal that unites all of Abreu’s work. According to Cantore’s depiction of Abreu, furthermore, *Onde andar  Dulce Veiga?* might have mirrored Abreu’s life in another way: Abreu used to say, “Of course I’m going to die of AIDS. I’m a clich . Because in the 70s I was persecuted and exiled. Then in the 80s, I was the gay writer. And obscure and suffered. And died of AIDS in the 90s. It’s obvious! It’s a full circle. I’m a clich .”⁴⁰⁴ Yet despite the clich , Abreu ends the story on a hopeful note, with the narrator’s attempt to have faith in the possibility of living with HIV and without Pedro.

Abreu’s optimism, despite the sexual, physical, and emotional destruction left in the wake of AIDS, is perhaps what makes his work so enduring. Like Cazuza’s claim that he would

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 175, 182-183.

⁴⁰² Severino J. Albuquerque, *Tentative Transgressions: Homosexuality, AIDS, and the Theater in Brazil*, 167.

⁴⁰³ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

“survive without a scratch” despite apocalyptic odds, Abreu’s constant hopefulness in light of complex problems (and his reliance on imagery rather than on the impact of the acronym “AIDS”) has sustained the popularity of his work.⁴⁰⁵ In his personal correspondences, too, Abreu expressed tremendous faith both in God and in his ability to continue to be a creative and productive member of society.⁴⁰⁶ Claiming that he was unafraid of death and without rancor, he came to think of AIDS as an opportunity to determine priorities in his life despite tremendous physical and emotional pain, including the feeling of being ostracized.⁴⁰⁷ According to author Luiz Fernando Lima Braga Júnior, in fact, Abreu’s attitude towards AIDS differs sharply from those of Cazuzza or Russo. Unlike Cazuzza, who imagined that he saw the face of death,⁴⁰⁸ and Russo, who was perhaps so fatalistic about his disease that he never admitted to being sick, Abreu never personified or rhapsodized about his death.⁴⁰⁹ Cantore attributes this fact to Abreu’s denial about his illness.⁴¹⁰

It is therefore particularly noteworthy that Abreu’s divulcation of being HIV-positive—through three *crônicas* published in *O Estado de São Paulo* in 1995—launched him into

⁴⁰⁵ Cazuzza, et al. “O Tempo não pára,” *O Tempo não pára*, Universal Music Group, 1989. My translation. This is perhaps also attributable to how atypical a writer Abreu was. Abreu had been a hippie and a punk, drew many references from popular culture, and launched himself to fame without a college degree (Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Histórias positivas*, 44-45).

⁴⁰⁶ See, for example, Caio Fernando Abreu and Italo Moriconi, *Cartas* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, 2002), 311-313, 335-337.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 311-313; Marcelo Secron Bessa, *Os perigosos*, 141.

⁴⁰⁸ Cazuzza, “Boas Novas,” *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988.

⁴⁰⁹ Luiz Fernando Lima Braga Júnior, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Narrativa e Homoerotismo* (PhD diss., Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2006), 5. Abreu’s attitude about his AIDS diagnosis might have been more hopeful than Cazuzza’s simply because Abreu was diagnosed at a later date and was probably more optimistic that good treatment—or even a cure—would be available. Indeed, the very effective AIDS drug “cocktail” (Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Treatment) hit the Brazilian market the same year as his death. See, for example, Severino J. Albuquerque, *Tentative Transgressions: Homosexuality, AIDS, and the Theater in Brazil*, 160; Jeanne Callegari, *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*, 172. According to Jacqueline Cantore, however, Abreu was never optimistic that he would beat AIDS. Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009. As for whether Renato Russo underwent treatment, there is no hard evidence in either direction. In a 1995 interview, Abreu claimed that AIDS had already been overcome with good treatment, no longer existing as a disease that promised an imminent death. Marcelo Bessa, “‘Quero brincar livre nos campos do Senhor’: Uma entrevista com Caio Fernando Abreu,” *PaLavra* 7-15, 1997, 10.

⁴¹⁰ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

unprecedented fame. Contrary to most cases, in which AIDS marginalizes PWAs, AIDS actually turned Abreu from a marginalized writer into an instant celebrity.⁴¹¹ Although Cazuzza's public admission of seropositivity similarly attracted a lot of media attention, not only was his coverage mostly negative, but Cazuzza was already famous and widely well-established before falling sick. Abreu's work, on the contrary, had appealed mostly to a gay readership before he came out as HIV-positive. Upon Abreu's declaration of seropositivity, the media focused attention on his serostatus to the detriment of focusing on his work. So fierce was the media's fixation with Abreu's seropositivity that Abreu not only half-jokingly called *Ovelhas negras* ("Black sheep"), a short story anthology released in 1995, a "posthumous book," but actually stopped giving interviews for a while.⁴¹² Yet in one of the few interviews Abreu did give, to Marcelo Secron Bessa, he echoed the complaint that *Ovelhas negras* did not receive "critical attention," but instead, voyeuristic attention because Abreu was HIV-positive.⁴¹³ According to Cantore, however, Abreu actually "created this character [of himself as a writer who received no critical attention, claiming that], 'people are coming to be around me because I'm dying, not because I'm writing.'"⁴¹⁴

Abreu's complaint gives further credence to the theory offered in Chapter Three about Cazuzza's treatment in the media. After the despicable portrayal of Cazuzza in *Veja* magazine, the media came to regard AIDS as something still extremely newsworthy, although—in repudiation of *Veja*—in a less voyeuristic way. Thus, Abreu's admission of seropositivity merited much media attention apart from his literary talent, though different from *Veja*'s analysis of Cazuzza:

⁴¹¹ Marcelo Secron Bessa, "Retrovírus, zidovudina e rá! AIDS, literatura e Caio Fernando Abreu," 77-96, in *A escrita de Adé: perspectivas teóricas dos estudos gays e lésbic@s no Brasil*, ed. Rick García Wilton Santos (São Paulo: Xamã, 2002), 78.

⁴¹² "Um livro póstumo." Marcelo Bessa, "'Quero brincar livre nos campos do Senhor': Uma entrevista com Caio Fernando Abreu," *PaLavra* 7-15, 1997, 7. My translation.

⁴¹³ "'Atenção crítica.'" *Ibid.*, 14. My translation. Emphasis in the original.

⁴¹⁴ Jacqueline Cantore, interview by author, digital recording, Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

even though media coverage of Abreu did not give proper attention to his literary work, it nevertheless did not reject his literary talent as *Veja* did Cazuza's musicianship.

Caio Fernando Abreu's Work through an Historical Lens

Caio Fernando Abreu's life and work can be viewed as a series of historical reactions. The oppressive nature of Brazil's military dictatorship stifled free expression, which fomented a counterculture movement that included *tropicália*, drug use, and free love. Abreu lived through this insurgency movement against the military dictatorship. This gave rise to works such as *Limite branco* (1971) and *O ovo apunhalado* (1975). Next, the advent of *abertura*—with the sexual revolution in full swing—saw the arrival of AIDS in Brazil, which effectively shattered people's ability to practice their sexuality with confidence and casualness. The terror and paranoia that reigned were mirror images of the national problems Brazil faced, including soaring inflation and the disillusionment around Tancredo Neves' failed ascendancy to the presidency. This gave rise to works such as “*Pela noite*” (1982) and “The Little Red Shoes” (1988). Eventually, however, the terror and paranoia of AIDS would subside as AIDS became a topic of public discussions—thanks in large part to Cazuza's admission of seropositivity—and as new drugs and treatment became available. This allowed some of Abreu's later works, such as his correspondences, *crônicas*, and even *Onde andaré Dulce Veiga?*, to be laced with a glimmer of hopefulness for the future.

Ultimately Abreu's stature in Brazilian history is that of an author who dared to turn homosexuality and AIDS into literary themes. Abreu, moreover, was decidedly non-political in his depiction of AIDS. Nowhere in his work, for example, are mentions of a conspiracy to kill

gay men or the need to politicize language related to HIV/AIDS.⁴¹⁵ AIDS was, according to Abreu, not a death sentence that attacked exclusively gay men (it is noteworthy that many of his HIV-positive protagonists are women, such as Márcia Fellatio and the character in “The Little Red Shoes”), but rather, a cultural and historical calamity that was neither insuperable nor resistant to literary analysis. In incorporating AIDS into his stories and *crônicas*, readers all over Brazil and the world were encouraged to read homosexuality and AIDS as topics that were not only worthy of address in serious literature, but also as themes that affected people in households around the globe.

⁴¹⁵ This stands in stark contrast to the work of Herbert Daniel and his fellow activists at ABIA, all of whom were determined to politicize the language of AIDS. See Chapter Two.

Conclusion

To paint a portrait of Brazil's *abertura* generation—one that lived through re-democratization, political corruption and disillusionment, the rise of numerous critical social movements, the introduction of hard drugs, and the shocking blow of AIDS—is a complex endeavor. In order to best examine this period, this thesis has complicated and re-thought the time frame of the era by challenging the traditional periodization of Brazilian history. This thesis offers an alternative to the classical demarcation of *abertura* (1974-1985). Instead, it presents a “long *abertura*” that extends from 1974 until 1994, which encompasses both a broad range of social advances (such as widespread student mobilization in 1977-1979; the movement for direct elections, *Diretas já*, in 1984; and the movement to impeach President Fernando Collor de Mello, *Fora Collor*, in 1992) and political and economic setbacks (such as the lost hope for a democratic presidency upon Tancredo Neves' death and José Sarney's subsequent rise to power in 1985, hyperinflation and ballooning national debt, and Collor's charges of corruptions in 1992). The “long *abertura*,” in short, is a novel concept that expresses both the hopes and frustrations that its generation underwent.

The advent of AIDS in Brazil around 1983 must be viewed within the context of this “long *abertura*.” When AIDS arrived in Brazil, the disease was not only one more social ill to add to a long list, but it also was something of a *zeitgeist* of the 1980s and 1990s, both a reflection of events in Brazil and a motivation to organize. AIDS, which exposed the Brazilian government's negligence to PWAs and the country's widespread homophobia, was one more cause for Brazilian citizens' anger. At the same time, AIDS mobilized gay groups in an unprecedented way and produced some of the most arresting music and writing of the

generation. The struggle against AIDS articulated much of what the “long *abertura*” generation was already feeling: lost, helpless, vulnerable, and ready for rebellion.⁴¹⁶ It should, therefore, perhaps come as no surprise that two of Brazil’s most riotous social movements—*Diretas já* and *Fora Collor*—fell exactly during this period. Youth would no longer be silenced.

Cazuza, Renato Russo, and Caio Fernando Abreu have all been heralded as the voices of this generation, to a large extent because AIDS would come to shape and partly define the generation of the “long *abertura*.” Although the three figures have left different legacies and conveyed slightly different messages during their lifetimes, they nevertheless connected with the disenfranchised youth of the “long *abertura*.” Charismatic, intelligent, and burning with rage, these figures in death have become larger than life.

Naturally, the most noticeable commonality among the three of them was their relationships with bisexuality and/or homosexuality and with their seropositivity. It is imperative and interesting to chart the ways that bisexuality and/or homosexuality and AIDS influenced their lives and work, but an even more fascinating exercise is to examine how and why three of the most prominent cultural icons of the 1980s and 90s could have been HIV-positive gay men. To underscore how remarkable these cases are, it is enough to note that these three mega-celebrities have no exact parallels, in terms of the magnitude of their fame, in American mass culture.⁴¹⁷

The culture of the “long *abertura*,” which offered both continuities and discontinuities from (and overlapped with) Brazil’s military dictatorship, can help to understand the social

⁴¹⁶ The term “long *abertura* generation” is my own. This generation has also been called the *Cara pintada* generation and, as per Renato Russo’s estimation, the *Coca-Cola* generation.

⁴¹⁷ The closest equivalents are perhaps American graffiti artist Keith Haring or actor Rock Hudson, but Haring was not nearly as mainstream as Cazuza, Russo, or Abreu, and Hudson not only denied both his homosexuality and seropositivity until the end of his life, but his popularity had already waned by the time of his death. More often than not, gay, HIV-positive artists are famous exclusively because of work they have done on homosexuality and/or AIDS (such as Larry Kramer and Randy Shilts). There are, of course, cases of very famous HIV-positive celebrities (such as Magic Johnson or Arthur Ashe) who are/were not gay.

context in which Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu lived and worked. The “long *abertura*,” which sought to move away from vehicles of repression, enabled artists to express their anger and disillusionment overtly, which had not been possible in the preceding generation. But it was precisely this pervasive anger and disillusionment that demonstrated how closely linked the “long *abertura*” was to the dictatorship years. The “long *abertura*” was as full of heartache as was the military dictatorship, albeit of a different variety. During the “long *abertura*,” Brazilians no longer had to worry about their civil rights, torture, disappearances, or censorship, but they did have other very real concerns in exchange: political corruption had crushed dreams for a new democracy, hyperinflation and national debt dashed hopes for a stable economy, and drugs and the arrival of AIDS tormented Brazil’s youth and complicated an already-fragile society.

Cazuza, Russo, and Abreu typified and drew from this social, political, and cultural climate in their art. Whereas homosexuality and/or AIDS oftentimes ostracized people and marked them as different from their heterosexual and/or seronegative counterparts, Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu pledged a policy of honesty in their work (which clearly varied from artist to artist) that included people of widely divergent backgrounds. What contributed to their ability to speak to so many members of the “long *abertura*” generation was partially their fame and the power and accessibility of their words, but also that the “long *abertura*,” aside from marking political openness, ushered in an era of personal openness as well. Brazilians were no longer in hiding, both literally and figuratively. Speaking frankly of their generation, Cazuzza believed the “long *abertura*” was a time to create an ideology that Brazilians could live by;⁴¹⁸ Russo believed

⁴¹⁸ Cazuzza, et al., “*Ideologia*,” *Ideologia*, Universal Music Group, 1988.

it was a time to revolt against imported consumerism;⁴¹⁹ and Abreu believed it was a time to continue to love despite all the consequences.⁴²⁰

As these wishes echoed all over Brazil and the world, Brazilians gained from their bravery and strength. Not only did Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu give form to the theretofore-amorphous complaints of an entire generation, but they also opened the way for greater understanding about sexuality and AIDS, debunking myths and winning supporters from all over Brazil. Brazilians welcomed the words of Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu because they reflected what ordinary citizens were feeling; Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu had the resolve to voice their words in large part because of the supportive spirit of the “long *abertura*.”

The concept of the “long *abertura*,” although not expressed in such explicit terms, finds articulation in their work. Given how tormented Brazil was in the 1980s and 90s, it is problematic to assert that Brazilians had achieved complete re-democratization by 1985. Instead, what Cazuzza, Russo, and Abreu communicated in their personal lives and work was the hope for a better future, in which all their dreams would be realized. This thesis therefore terminates the “long *abertura*” in 1994 because it was a year that marked the beginning of accomplishing much of what these three artists had been waiting for. In 1994, a democratically-elected president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, would serve two successful full terms in office, Brazilian currency would stabilize, and a generous World Bank loan would help to effectively combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in Brazil. In the couple of years that followed the close of the “long *abertura*,” the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) held its seventeenth international conference

⁴¹⁹ Renato Russo, et al. “Geração Coca-Cola,” *Mais do mesmo*, EMI Brazil, 1998.

⁴²⁰ Caio Fernando Abreu, “Queen of the Night,” in *Dragons* (London: Boulevard, 1990), 84-85.

in Rio de Janeiro in 1995—a major achievement for the gay movement in Brazil—and the very effective drug cocktail finally entered the Brazilian market in 1996 to treat HIV/AIDS.⁴²¹

These triumphs, however, are not to say that Brazil has resolved all of its conflicts. As always, new ills have replaced the old.⁴²² Although today Brazil's National Program on AIDS serves as a model for countries worldwide (especially because of its commitment to provide free antiretroviral drugs to anyone in need), Brazil's population of PWAs is still largely comprised of the most marginalized Brazilian citizens. Women, blacks, homosexuals, and the poor represent disproportionately high numbers of PWAs, and though the treatment they receive for HIV/AIDS is much improved from two decades ago, their battles against AIDS are still long and thankless.⁴²³ Moreover, for PWAs worldwide without access to proper medication, AIDS is still imminently lethal. As they struggle to live despite all the odds, it is fitting to remember the examples of Cazusa, Russo, and Abreu, whose emotionally-charged cultural productions gave hope to an entire nation.

⁴²¹ The Seventeenth International meeting of ILGA marked a shift towards widespread mobilization for LGBT rights in Brazil. Gay pride parades in Brazil's major cities are today attended in enormous proportions. See James N. Green, "More Love and More Desire: The Building of a Brazilian Movement," 91-109, in *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999).

⁴²² See, for example, Alexei Barrionuevo, "Ecstasy Ensnarers Upper-Class Teenagers in Brazil," *The New York Times*, February 14, 2009; Celia W. Dugger, "Brazilian Slums Are Seen as Pawns in Political Games," *The New York Times*, January 18, 2004.

⁴²³ See *Boletim Epidemiológico AIDS/DST, anoIV No. 1*. (Brasília: Ministério da Saúde/Secretaria da Vigilância em Saúde/Programa Nacional de DST e AIDS, December 2007).

Works Cited

Archives Consulted

Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

DVDs

Cazuza o tempo não pára. DVD. Directed by Walter Carvalho and Sandra Werneck. Brazil: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2005.

Renato Russo, Entrevistas. DVD. Produced by Marcelo Fróes. Rio de Janeiro: MTV, 2006.

The Gift. DVD. Directed by Louise Hogarth. U.S.: Dream Out Loud Productions, 2002.

Tributo a Cazuza. DVD. Brazil Som Livre Video, 2001.

Magazines and Newspapers

Bizz

The Boston Globe

Correio Braziliense

The Economist

O Estado de São Paulo

Estado de São Paulo Online

Folha de São Paulo

The Globe and Mail

IstoÉ

Jornal do Brasil

Jornal o Povo

Manchete

Marie Claire

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report

The New York Times

PaLavra

The Philadelphia Inquirer

The Times (London)

Veja

Zero Hora

Interviews

Cantore, Jacqueline. Interview by author. Digital recording. Brooklyn, NY, 14 February, 2009.

Green, James N. Interview by author. Notes. Providence, RI, October 7, 2008, December 11, 2008.

Lectures

“AIDS in the International Perspective,” Professor Patricia Symonds, Brown University, September 9, 2008.

Books and Articles:

Abreu, Angela and Porro, Alessandro. “Cazuza: uma vítima da AIDS agoniza em praça pública,” *Veja*, April 26, 1989.

Abreu, Caio Fernando. *Caio 3D: o essencial de década de 1990*. Rio de Janeiro: AGIR, 2005.

_____. “Noites de Santa Tereza,” in *Ovelhas negras, de 1962 a 1995*. Porto Alegre: Editora Sulina, 1995.

_____. “Queen of the Night,” in *Dragons*. London: Boulevard, 1990.

_____. “The Little Red Shoes,” in *Dragons*. London: Boulevard, 1990.

_____. “Beauty,” in *Dragons*. London: Boulevard, 1990.

_____. *Whatever Happened to Dulce Veiga?: a B-novel*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000.

Abreu, Caio Fernando and Moriconi, Italo. *Cartas*. Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, 2002.

Aggleton, Peter. “Under the Blanket: Bisexualities and AIDS in India,” in *Bisexualities and AIDS: International Perspectives*, ed. Peter Aggleton. Bristol, PA: Taylor & Francis, 1996.

“AIDS—219 casos no eixo Rio-São Paulo,” *Jornal do Brasil*, March 13, 1985.

“AIDS já afeta as doações de sangue,” *Folha de São Paulo*, July 9, 1983.

“AIDS: O que se deve saber,” *Jornal do Brasil*, October 10, 1985.

“AIDS: segunda onda de pânico,” *IstoÉ*, March 13, 1985.

- Albuquerque, Severino J. *Tentative Transgressions: Homosexuality, AIDS, and the Theater in Brazil*. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.
- Alexandre, Ricardo. *Dias de luta: o rock e o Brasil dos anos 80*. Brasil: DBA, 2002.
- _____. "Doente, artista evitava aparecer em público," *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 11, 1996.
- Alves, Maria Helena Moreira. *State and Opposition in Military Brazil*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985.
- "A multiplicação do mal: a AIDS se espalha," *Veja*, April 14, 1985.
- Antunes, Alex. "Legião errante: a longa jornada do trio, da fábrica de hits até o neoprogressivo," *Bizz*, January, 1992.
- "Appendix A: AIDS Defining Conditions." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, December 5, 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5710a2.htm>. 15 December 2008.
- "A portrait in red; AIDS in Brazil," *The Economist*, March 15, 2008.
- Araújo, Celso. "Fascista não tem nada a ver com Rock'N'Roll," *Correio Braziliense*, November 17, 1985.
- Araujo, Lucinha. *Só as mães são felices*. São Paulo: Editora Globo, 1997.
- Arenas, Fernando. *Utopias of Otherness: Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
- Armus, Diego. *Disease in the History of Modern Latin America: From Malaria to AIDS*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Arruda, Marcos. *External Debt: Brazil and the International Financial Crisis*. London: Pluto Press, 2000.
- Barrionuevo, Alexei. "Ecstasy Ensnarers Upper-Class Teenagers in Brazil," *The New York Times*, February 14, 2009.
- Bessa, Marcelo Secron. *Histórias positivas: a literatura (des)construindo a AIDS*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record, 1997.
- _____. *Os perigosos: autobiografias e AIDS*. Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora, ABIA, 2002.
- _____. "'Quero brincar livre nos campos do Senhor': Uma entrevista com Caio

- Fernando Abreu,” *PaLavra*, 1997: 7-15.
- _____. “Retrovírus, zidovudina e rá! AIDS, literatura e Caio Fernando Abreu,” 77-96, in *A escrita de Adé: perspectivas teóricas dos estudos gays e lésbic@s no Brasil*, ed. Rick García Wilton Santos. São Paulo: Xamã, 2002.
- Beyrer, Chris, et al. *Evaluation of the World Bank's Assistance in Responding to the AIDS Epidemic: Brazil Case Study*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2005.
- Boletim Epidemiológico AIDS/DST, anoIV No. 1*. Brasília: Ministério da Saúde/Secretaria da Vigilância em Saúde/Programa Nacional de DST e AIDS, December 2007.
- Bryan, Guilherme. *Quem tem um sonho não dança: cultura jovem brasileira nos anos 80*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2004.
- Callegari, Jeanne. *Caio Fernando Abreu: Inventário de um escritor irremediável*. Rio de Janeiro: Seoman, 2008.
- Camargo, José Carlos. “Cazuza tem virus da Aids mas diz estar com ‘saúde ótima,’” *Folha de São Paulo*, February 13, 1989.
- Castilho, Angélica Schlude Erica. *Depois do fim: vida, amor e morte nas canções da Legião Urbana*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Hama, 2002.
- Cazuza; Araujo, Lucinha; and Echeverria, Regina. *Preciso dizer que te amo: todas as letras do poeta*. São Paulo, Editora Globo: 2001.
- Chinchilla, Norma Stoltz. “Marxism, Feminism, and the Struggle for Democracy in Latin America,” 37-51, in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*, ed. Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez. San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992.
- Chnaiderman, Miriam. “Suicídios traem Russo,” *Folha de São Paulo*, October 19, 1996.
- Cochrane, Michelle. *When AIDS Began: San Francisco and the Making of an Epidemic*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Côrtes, Celina. “Segredos de Renato Russo,” *IstoÉ*, October 23, 1996.
- Daniel, Herbert. *Vida antes da morte*. Rio de Janeiro: ABIA, 1989.
- Daniel, Herbert and Parker, Richard. *AIDS, a terceira epidemia: ensaios e tentativas*. São Paulo: IGLU Editora, 1991.
- _____. “The Third Epidemic: An Exercise in Solidarity” in *Sexuality, Politics and AIDS in Brazil*, ed. Herbert Daniel and Richard Parker. Washington, D.C.: The Falmer Press, 1993.

- Dapieve, Arthur. *Brock: o rock brasileiro dos anos 80*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora 34, 1995.
- _____. *Renato Russo: o trovador solitário*. Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará, Secretaria Municipal de Cultura, 2000.
- Dapieve, Arthur and Adário, Paulo. "Ok, estamos num empasse," *Jornal do Brasil, Caderno "B,"* June 27, 1988.
- Denning, Mike. "Rock Music," in *Social Text* (Spring-Summer 1984): 327-328.
- Dowdney, Luke. *Crianças do tráfico: um estudo de caso de crianças em violência armada organizada no Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: 7 Letras, 2003.
- Dugger, Celia W. "Brazilian Slums Are Seen as Pawns in Political Games," *The New York Times*, January 18, 2004.
- Dunn, Christopher. *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
- Farmer, Paul. *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
- Fausto, Boris. *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Filho, João Roberto Martins. *Os estudantes e a política no Brasil (1962-1992) = Students and politics in Brazil*. São Carlos, Brasil: Departamento de Ciências Sociais, Centro de Educação e Ciências Humanas, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, 1994.
- Filho, João Roberto Martins and Collins, John. "Students and Politics in Brazil, 1962-1992," in *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (January 1998): 156-169.
- Filho, Luciano Almeida. "A morte do poeta," *Jornal o Povo*, October 12, 1996.
- Finatti, Humberto. "Legião Urbana 'faz as pazes' com SP," *Folha de São Paulo*, June 6, 1994.
- Foreman, Judy. "'Ominous' Signs found on AIDS Spread," *The Boston Globe*, April 13, 1989.
- Frasca, Tim. *AIDS in Latin America*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.
- Galo, Ana and Varejão, Marilda. "O Drama (e o Desabafo) de Cazuza," *Manchete*, May 13, 1989.
- Galvão, Jane. *1980-2001: uma cronologia da epidemia de HIV/AIDS no Brasil e no mundo*. Rio de Janeiro: Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS, 2002.

- Garrett, Laurie. "The Lessons of HIV/AIDS," in *Foreign Affairs* 84 (2005): 51-64.
- Gauthier, DeAnn and Forsyth, Craig J. "Bareback Sex, Bug Chasers, and the Gift of Death" in *Sexual Deviance*, ed. Christopher Hensley and Richard Tewksbury. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.
- Goertzel, Ted. *Fernando Henrique Cardoso: Reinventing Democracy in Brazil*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999.
- Green, James N. *Beyond Carnival: Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- _____. "The Emergence of the Brazilian Gay Liberation Movement, 1977-1981," in *Latin American Perspectives* Vol. 21, No. 1 (Winter, 1994): 38-55.
- _____. "More Love and More Desire: The Building of a Brazilian Movement," in *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, ed Barry D. Adam, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and André Krouwel. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999.
- Green, Jesse. "Flirting with Suicide." *New York Times*, September 15, 1996.
- Hall, Kevin G. "AIDS Fight Puts Brazil's Bishops and Health Officials at Odds; Report On A Free-Condom Policy," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 9, 2004.
- Higgins, Kathleen J. "*Licentious Liberty*" in a Brazilian Gold-Mining Region: *Slavery, Gender, and Social Control in Eighteenth-Century Sabará, Minas Gerais*. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999.
- "HIV/AIDS; AIDS Healthcare Foundation Lauds Brazil for Negotiating 30% Price Cut on Abbott's Kaletra," *Drug Week*, July 20, 2007.
- "Hospital das clínicas amplia número de leitos para AIDS de 6 para 26," *Jornal do Brasil*, August 14, 1985.
- Jackson, K. David, ed. *Oxford Anthology of the Brazilian Short Story*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Júnior, Carlos Siqueira. *Letra, música e outras conversas*. Rio de Janeiro: Gryphus, 1995.
- Knox, Paul. "Fans Follow Cazuzza to Grave, Rock Singer Brazil's Best-Known Victim of AIDS," *The Globe and Mail*, July 9, 1990.
- Kramer, Larry. *The Normal Heart*. New York: New American Library, 1985.
- "Legião redescobre o caminho do palco," *Zero Hora*, May 20, 1994.

- Levine, Robert. *The History of Brazil*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999.
- Lima, Luiz André Correia. *Cazuza: lenda e legenda dos anos 80*. Londrina: Editora UEL, 1997.
- Lima, Roni. "Poeta da década perdida," *Folha de São Paulo*, October 12, 1996.
- MacRae, Edward. *A construção da igualdade: identidade sexual e política no Brasil da "abertura"*. Campinas, SP: Editora da Unicamp, 1990.
- _____. "Homosexual Identities in Transitional Brazilian Politics," in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, ed. Arturo Escobar and Sonia Alvarez. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1992.
- "Mãe do cantor Renato Russo afirma que ele não tinha Aids," *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 12, 1996.
- Mainwaring, Scott. *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil, 1916-1985*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986.
- Margolis, Mac. "The Fight Against AIDS: Campaign Divides Brazil's Bishops," *The Times (London)*, February 16, 1987.
- Meade, Teresa. *A Brief History of Brazil*. New York: Checkmark Books, 2003.
- Mitchell, Mark, ed. *The Penguin Book of International Gay Writing*. New York: Viking, 1995.
- Mott, Luiz. "Crise da Aids reprime bissexualidade tropicalista," *Folha de São Paulo*, September 30, 1993.
- _____. *Violação dos direitos humanos e assassinato de homossexuais no Brasil, 1999*. Salvador, Bahia: Associação Brasileira de Gays, Lésbicas e Travestis, Editora Grupo Gay da Bahia, 2000.
- Nazzari, Muriel. "An Urgent Need to Conceal: The System of Honor and Shame in Colonial Brazil," in *The Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Lyman L. Johnson and Sonya Lisett-Rivera. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998.
- Neto, Antônio Fausto. *Mortes em derrapagem: os casos Corona e Cazuza: no discurso da comunicação de massa*. Rio de Janeiro: Rio Fundo Editora, 1991.
- Neves, Ezequiel. *Barão Vermelho: por que a gente é assim*. São Paulo: Globo, 2007.
- _____, ed. "Cazuza by Cazuza," compiled from interviews between 1983 and 1989 in

IstoÉ, Playboy, Amiga, and Interview.

http://www.cazuza.com.br/sec_textos_list.php?language=en (3 November 2008).

- “Novo Legião Urbana chega às lojas dia 20,” *Folha de São Paulo*, September 2, 1996.
- “Nunca fui santo,” *IstoÉ*, April 27, 1994.
- “O Rock brasileiro perde seu messias,” *Jornal Zero Hora*, October 12, 1996.
- “Pacientes de AIDS têm 32 leitos em hospital alugado em São Paulo,” *Jornal do Brasil*, February 15, 1986.
- “Para descobrir outra Legião,” *Zero Hora*, May 28, 1994.
- “Parentes e amigos enterram Cazuza ao som de um ‘blues,’” *Jornal do Brasil*, July 8, 1990.
- Parker, Richard. “AIDS in Brazil,” in *Sexuality, Politics, and AIDS in Brazil: in Another World?*, ed. Herbert Daniel and Richard Parker. Washington, DC : Falmer Press: 1993.
- _____. “Changing Brazilian Constructions of Homosexuality” in *Latin American Male Homosexualities*, ed. Steven O. Murray. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995.
- _____. “Changing Sexualities: Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Brazil,” in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, ed. by Matthew C. Gutmann. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
- _____. *Políticas, Instituições e AIDS: Enfrentando a AIDS no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: ABIA, 1997.
- Parker, Richard and Aggleton, Peter. *Estigma, discriminação e AIDS*. Rio de Janeiro: Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS, 2001.
- Passos, Maria Helena. “Roqueiro Brasileiro - Renato Russo,” *Marie Claire*, January, 1995.
- Pedrosa, José Stalin. *Ong/Aids*. Rio de Janeiro: Planeta Gay Books, 1998.
- Pen, Marcelo. “Quem tem medo de Caio F.?” in Caio Fernando Abreu, *Caio 3D: o essencial de década de 1990*. Rio de Janeiro: AGIR, 2002.
- Pereira, Victor Hugo Adler. “Marcas no corpo, no texto e na cena de Caio Fernando” in *A escrita de Adé: perspectivas teóricas dos estudos gays e lésbic@s no Brasil*, ed. Rick García Wilton Santos. São Paulo: Xamã, 2002.
- Pinto, Cristina Ferreira, ed. *Urban Voices: Contemporary Short Stories from Brazil*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1999.

- Prado, Miguel Arcanjo. "Se estivesse vivo, Cazuza completaria 50 anos nesta sexta-feira," *Folha de São Paulo Online*, April 4, 2008.
<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/ilustrada/ult90u389208.shtml>. 3 November 2008.
- Quinlan, Susan Canty and Arenas, Fernando. *Lusosex: Gender and Sexuality in the Portuguese-Speaking World*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.
- Riccardi, Paulo de Tarso, ed. *Caio de amores: contos*. Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1996.
- Ridings, Alan. "Brazil Called Lax in AIDS Treatment," *The New York Times*, December 15, 1986.
- Rohter, Larry. "Brazilian Pop Uneasy in the Spotlight," *The New York Times*, April 23, 1989.
- Russo, Renato, et al. *Conversações com Renato Russo*. Campo Grande: Letra Livre Editora, 1996.
- Russo, Renato and Assad, Simone, ed. *Renato Russo de A a Z: as idéias do líder da Legião Urbana*. Campo Grande: Letra Livre, 2000.
- "Sai mais um CD do baú do Legião Urbana," *Estado de São Paulo Online*, March 22, 2001,
<http://www.estadao.com.br/arquivo/arteelazer/2001/not20010322p5250.htm>. 15 October 2008).
- Sant'Anna, Affonso Romano de. "Os vírus da vida e da morte," *Jornal do Brasil* November 5, 1986.
- Schiller, Nina Glick, et al. "Risky Business: The Cultural Construction of AIDS Risk Groups" in *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 38, no. 10, 1994: 1337-1346.
- Serbin, Kenneth. *Secret Dialogues: Church-State Relations, Torture, and Social Justice in Authoritarian Brazil*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000.
- Shilts, Randy. *And the Band Played On*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988.
- Skidmore, Thomas E. *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- _____. "Collor's Downfall in Historical Perspective," in *Corruption and Political Reform in Brazil: the Impact of Collor's Impeachment*, ed. Keith Rosenn and Richard Downes. Coral Gables: North-South Center Press, 1999.
- _____. *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Sontag, Susan. *Illness as metaphor; and, AIDS and Its Metaphors*. New York: Picador USA,

2001.

_____. *The Way We Live Now*. New York: Noonday Press, 2001.

Sternbach, Nancy Saporta, et al. "Feminisms in Latin America: From Bogotá to San Bernardo," in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*, ed. Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez. San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992.

St. John, Ronald. "Crisis Within a Crisis: AIDS and Health Care in Latin America and the Caribbean," in *Health and Health Care in Latin America During the Lost Decade: Insights for the 1990s*, ed. Connie Weil and Joseph Scarpaci. Iowa City: the Center for International and Comparative Studies at the University of Iowa and the University of Iowa Libraries, 1992.

Terto, Jr., Veriano. "Male Homosexuality and Seropositivity: The Construction of Social Identities in Brazil," in *Framing the Sexual Subject*, ed. Richard Parker, Regina Maria Barbosa, and Peter Aggleton. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Torgoff, Martin. *Can't Find My Way Home: America in the Great Stoned Age, 1945-2000*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004.

Torrens, James S. "The Role of Liberation Theology: An Interview with Alvaro Barreiro," in *Fighting for the Soul of Brazil*, ed. Kevin Danaher and Michael Shellenberger. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1995.

Trevisán, João Silvério. *Devassos no Paraíso: a homossexualidade no Brasil, da colônia à atualidade*. São Paulo: Editora Max Limonad, 1986.

_____. *Perverts in Paradise*. London: GMP, 1986.

Tyrer, Robert. "Now the Carnival is Over for Sarney," *The Times (London)*, February 22, 1987.

Utzeri, Fritz. "Vírus pequeno provoca 'câncer-gay.'" *Jornal do Brasil*, June 21, 1983.

Wirth, Louis. "The Ghetto," in *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (July 1927): 57-71.

Masters Theses and Ph.D. Dissertations

Braga Júnior, Luiz Fernando Lima. "Caio Fernando Abreu: Narrativa e Homoerotismo." Doctoral thesis, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2006.

Caplan, Patricia Ann. "AIDS Policy in Brazil." Doctoral thesis, University of Texas, Austin, 1988.

Darrah, Jennifer. "Brazil's Response to AIDS: Embedded State, Hybrid Institutional Spaces, and Social Movement Autonomy." Master's thesis, Brown University, 2005.

Demarchi, André Luis Campanha. "Legionários do rock: Um estudo sobre quem pensa, ouve e vive a música da banda Legião Urbana." Master's thesis, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 2006.

Franca, Martha San Juan. "Repensando o modelo para a divulgação científica: o caso da aids na imprensa brasileira (1981-2001)." Master's thesis, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, 2002.

Gomez, Eduardo J. "Responding to Contested Epidemics: Democratization, International Pressures, and the Sources of Institutional Change." Doctoral thesis, Brown University, 2008.

Klein, Charles. "AIDS, Activism and the Social Imagination in Brazil." Doctoral thesis, University of Michigan, 1996.

Sound Recordings

Cazuza, et al. *Exagerado*. Som Livre, 1985.

Cazuza, *Ideologia*. Universal Music Group, 1988.

Cazuza, et al. *O Tempo não pára*, Universal Music Group, 1989.

Russo, Renato, et al., *Música para acampamentos*, Emi-Odeon, 1992.

_____. *A Tempestade (ou O Livro dos Dias)*, EMI Brazil, 1996.

_____. *Que País é Este? 1978/1987*, EMI Brazil, 1987.

_____. *As Quatro Estações*, EMI Brazil, 1989.

_____. *Mais do mesmo*, EMI Brazil, 1998.

Veloso, Caetano. *Araçá azul*, Polygram International, 1972.

_____. *A arte*, Polygram International, 1985.

_____. *Totalmente Demais*, Universal Int'l, 1986.

Unpublished Works

Green, James N. "Feathers and Fists: Socialists and the Brazilian Gay Liberation Movement in the 1970s."

Picture Sources

For Cazuza:

www.cazuza.com.br. 1 April 2009.

For Renato Russo:

http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_dY-VIZYsDEo/STcQvYImqKI/AAAAAAAAADg4/omSc76kVo0M/s400/Renato_Russo.bmp.jpg. 1 April 2009.

<http://www.badaueonline.com.br/dados/imagens/renato%20russo.jpg>. 1 April 2009.

For Caio Fernando Abreu:

http://www.overmundo.com.br/_overblog/img/1169097360_caiofernando.jpg. 1 April 2009.

http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_5IA58uvw-Ig/SbQz9dTP3-I/AAAAAAAAAA4/xAFFa4qLgFU/S660/CAIO.jpg. 1 April 2009.