

Article



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POETRY SLAMS IN THE ERMELINO MATARAZZO CULTURAL MOVEMENT: Semiosis, activism, and media*Os saraus no movimento cultural Ermelino Matarazzo: Semioses, ativismos e mídias**Los saraos en el Movimiento Cultural Ermelino Matarazzo: semiosis, activismo y medios*

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Corresponding author:Nilton de Carvalho
(niltonfar.carvalho@gmail.com)**ABSTRACT:**

This article analyses the poetry slams organised by the Ermelino Matarazzo Cultural Movement. The study addresses two productive fronts: a) the media broadcasts of the poetry slams and b) the codes of an activist culture that is articulated in these meetings. Using the cartographic method, based on theories of difference, we trace the communicational landscape of these slams and the collective as a space that results from cultural occupation. On another front, the Semiotics of Culture allows us to understand the collective's slams as a fabric of significations, affections, and heterogeneous processes, which are articulated in the face of social inequalities in the city of São Paulo.

Keywords: Slams; Culture; Peripheries; Media.**RESUMO**

O presente artigo analisa os saraus organizados pelo Movimento Cultural Ermelino Matarazzo. O estudo trata de duas frentes produtivas: a) as transmissões midiáticas dos saraus e b) os códigos de uma cultura ativista articulados nesses encontros. Pelo método cartográfico, com base nas teorias da diferença, traçamos a paisagem comunicacional dos saraus e do coletivo enquanto espaço fruto de uma ocupação cultural. Em outra frente, a Semiótica da Cultura possibilita compreender os saraus do coletivo como tecido de significações, afetos e processos heterogêneos, que se articulam frente às desigualdades sociais da cidade de São Paulo.

Palavras-chave: Saraus, Cultura, Periferias, Mídias**RESUMEN**

Este artículo analiza los saraos organizadas por el Movimiento Cultural Ermelino Matarazzo. El estudio aborda dos frentes productivos: a) las transmisiones mediáticas de los saraos y b) los códigos de una cultura activista articulada en estos encuentros. Utilizando el método cartográfico, basado en teorías de la diferencia, trazamos el paisaje comunicacional de los saraos y lo colectivo como un espacio resultante de una ocupación cultural. En otro frente, la Semiótica de la Cultura permite comprender los saraos del colectivo como un tejido de significados, afectos y procesos heterogéneos, que se articulan frente a las desigualdades sociales en la ciudad de São Paulo.

Palabras clave: Saraos, Cultura, Periferias, Medios

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Introduction

This article presents partial results of a postdoctoral research project¹ dedicated to the study of the processes of sociocultural transformation of community members of a cultural collective located in the periphery of the city of São Paulo—more specifically, in the Ermelino Matarazzo neighbourhood in East São Paulo. At the onset of its activities, the collective was committed to local issues, later becoming an important mediator between the community and the public agencies of the city. Over time, the collective began to dedicate itself to the development of cultural events drawing on the artistic activities of the residents of the neighbourhood and the nearby regions.

Many of the Project's concerns helped to formulate the notion of belonging as a union around common causes that can be strengthened and create a sense of community struggle for the common good. One of these questions concerns the role of artistic activities in studies on the demands of peripheral regions and their value in the general functioning of the metropolis. When learning about the activities developed in what was consolidated as the Ermelino Matarazzo Cultural Movement (henceforth MCEM), the most significant question that mobilised the demand for in-depth research was: how do artistic activities emerge within social movements fighting for the basic rights of social life, create connections between the material demands of everyday life, and awaken the need to enjoy social conditions that dignify their citizens?

We observed that people who came together around a sense of community questioned and demanded a greater goal: their existence as individuals capable of achievements that are possible for all human beings, without discrimination. To that end, artistic activities proved to be fundamental. From the moment they become part of the communities' everyday—more than an exercise in activism—, these activities promoted awareness of their own cognitive and creative capacities, in addition to stimulating self-esteem and the development of emotional bonds without which no struggle—not even a true political struggle—can be sustained.

From these first impressions, it is clear that one of the vectors of mobilisation and transformative action² happens when young people join these activities, which redirect their strengths in the face of the precariousness of their surroundings. The relationship between the collective and its surroundings is built on a daily basis. In one of the field observations, for example, we noticed that a group of children, who were around 10-12 years-old, arrived at the collective space, greeted those who were already there, and organised themselves in a corner of the main room for a game of chess. This is a space to be appropriated by children, young people, and residents of the region.

In this sense, the underlying hypothesis of this research concerns the understanding of artistic activities as sources of expansion of relations between the different systems involved, especially the social, humanitarian, environmental, and technological systems. In other words, living with social dignity means building healthy conditions for people, environments, institutions, organisations and everything else that involves life on the planet. This article is part of an ongoing research project that aims to develop a cartography³ of some social collectives that operate in different regions of the country. The cartography to which we refer is inspired by the theories of difference of Deleuze and Guattari (2000), precisely in that the authors suggest a method to understand decentralised heterogeneous phenomena⁴ that configure experiences of difference—in this case, the research accompanies the object in its processuality, and, based on this acquired knowledge, outlines a reality that is not previously given (Kastrup; Passos, 2013), but one that signifies something emergent, alternative—just as we understand MCEM to be, as a cultural social movement. Within the limits of this text, we will deal with the cultural and semiotic processes of the poetry slams, as face-to-face and media events, organised by MCEM, as we understand that, during these gatherings, cultural mediations are materialised in artistic language.

For that, we understand that *culture is dynamic*, in dialogue with Yuri Lotman (1996, p. 16)—that is, it carries information (memories, codes) and metalinguistic mechanisms that describe themselves, but it also enables the production of new information, in moments of unpredictability and experimentation. This is what we observe during the poetry slams, as dynamic cultural processes in the very act of speaking and reciting a poem, maintaining

1 Postdoctoral research entitled "Communication practices of difference: a cartography of media experiments", conducted at the School of Communications and Arts-USP, under the supervision of Professor Irene de Araújo Machado, with a CNPq Scholarship, n. 32/2023 – Junior Postdoctoral Fellowship.

2 From a theoretical point of view, such articulation was defined by Félix Guattari (1985), a scholar of similar collective manifestations, as a demonstration of a choice that suggests *other ways of living*.

3 Cartography that comprises two axes: a) the semiotic functioning of collectives and, on another front, b) understanding collectives in their media dimension of differentiations and experimentations.

4 This reflection is found in *A Thousand Plateaus* – vol. 1, in which Deleuze and Guattari (2000) discuss the understanding of the ontological figure of the rhizome, which, in general terms, inasmuch as it is decentralised, requires a method capable of designing it as an alternative. Cartography would be this method.

a certain code that is precious to the movement, which concerns cultural activism in Ermelino Matarazzo, and, at times, takes on more current political topics (gender, race, and confronting economic inequalities), raised by the young people who author the poems. For this text, we selected some meetings of the *Slam Fluxo* poetry slams, published on the collective's pages on YouTube and Instagram. Currently, the poetry slams take place in person and are broadcast on social media, which implies observing how the context of the collective will resonate in terms of its media signification—and, no less importantly, understanding whether this media environment allows for differences in ways of thinking (Deleuze, 1983) about artistic language (in this case, poetry). We therefore ask: what are the codifications and recodifications in the language of poetry slams as media events? What follows are some observations about the cultural dynamics that mark a series of activities by the collective.

The sociopolitical make of the Ermelino Matarazzo Cultural Movement

The Mateus Santos Occupation is the result of a joint action by a series of cultural collectives located in Ermelino Matarazzo, whose first protests, in 2011, took place on Primeiro de Maio Square (in the heart of the neighbourhood). For the collectives, it was necessary for Ermelino Matarazzo to have a unified cultural agenda and a space that could accommodate all of its activities. In 2016, the movement expanded its actions and occupied the space of a former subprefecture in the region, comprising three storeys and a few rooms. The occupation itself is named after Mateus Santos, a teacher⁵ and activist who lived in Ermelino Matarazzo.

Despite the collective's productivity in offering free cultural activities, the occupation of the space remained an issue, as the relationship with the government was marked by a series of clashes. With João Dória (PSDB) becoming mayor in 2017, some complications arose, especially due to the administration's approach to culture—at the time, the mayor suggested that participants should sell food products to raise funds, in a discourse very close to that of entrepreneurialism, which is not a problem in and of itself, as the collective participates in such events in the periphery, but this was not the movement's main goal. The tension reached its peak when the then Secretary of Culture, André Sturm, threatened to attack Gustavo Soares, a member of MCEM. After the repercussion in the press, the collective had its water and electricity supply cut in an attempt to force the young people to withdraw from the occupied space. The episode marks a significant turning point for the movement because, whilst the cuts were intended to vacate the space, the solution found by the collective was to expand its activities and keep the place running instead.

*"The periphery moves against the grain. Whenever there is persecution, we expand our work [...] we started adopting makedoism⁶, peripheral technology, holding events in this space"*⁷, comments MCEM's Gil Douglas on the water and electricity cuts. The concept of *makedoism* derives from the popular adage of "making do", an expression that cultural collectives generally use to emphasise their resistance. An influential name in the cultural movements of São Paulo's peripheries, the activist Mestre Soró⁸, from the Quilombaque Cultural Community, often used this expression, summarising the many strategies for working and experimenting with whatever resources are available, as noted by Cleiton Ferreira (2023), a member of Quilombaque:

Anchored in the assumptions and foundations of a systemic vision, we created a multidimensional methodology to diagnose, plan, and act on reality, produce knowledge and learn in a procedural and permanent way—that is, if you have it, you do it; if you don't have it, you do it anyway. YOU MAKE DO! (Ferreira, 2023)

The ability to position oneself in the face of problems that are generated by historical inequalities, mechanisms of power, and systemic paradigms required collectives to resort to experimental practices. This arrangement of independent work should be understood less as improvisation than as a strategy in the construction of possibilities, generally marked by the emergence of solidarities. Cleiton Ferreira (2023), for example, mentions the resistance practices of *quilombos*, whose cultural arrangements around new modes of sociability produced alternatives and new possibilities of empowerment.

When coming across the term *makedoism*, we are not faced with jargon internal to the cultural movement, but with a concept that invites us to think about the very condition of the country that is raised by peripheral activism—

5 There is a room in the collective space dedicated to the memory of the place, where there are several of the writings by the professor and activist, who called for cultural equipment in Ermelino.

6 "*Sivirologia*" in its original, from the expression "virar-se", meaning "to make do".

7 Quote taken from a multimedia material about cultural collectives organised by Sesc São Paulo. See Sesc (2021).

8 Educator and cultural activist, member of the Quilombaque collective from the district of Perus in São Paulo. Soró passed away in 2019

that is, we need to consider the notion of perspective as per Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2002): what does *the collective* say when it uses the term *makedoism*? This popular form of organisation suggests a set of lessons, tactics for confronting inequalities, and experiments in media and artistic languages. Therefore, there is always *something to come* from these gatherings.

The same goes for the use of social networks, which may, in technical terms, resemble what is given in the machinations of these technologies themselves (tagging, hashtags, live streaming, etc.). However, some elements differ: the language used by young people, the social issues addressed in media productions, the Ermelino neighbourhood as the centre of articulations and productions, etc. The members of MCEM—most of whom are young—are the main agents of the reformulation of action strategies, especially because they were born under the domain of communication technologies and work on social networks, creating another level of interaction that, in the virtual world, places people and collectives from distant neighbourhoods in the same communicative space, expanding possibilities for action, thought, and decision-making. The use of technology is common through tagging, hashtags, live streaming, short clips of events, and the use of digital software to create musical bases during the slams. Young people create a particular universe, including the use of language punctuated by idiolects—that is, specific terms used to characterise a given situation. This involves responding politically (and ethically) to a history of structural inequalities that mark the very configuration of a city like São Paulo (Rolnik, 2004).

Today, communication between collective and residents⁹ is enhanced by the use of social networks and messaging apps—encompassing even a public WhatsApp group in which the calendar of events is constantly updated. Technologies are an offshoot of the media language of cultural mediations, cultivated and expanded since the occupation of public squares, which gave rise to the movement.

The avenue where the collective is located was hit by severe floodings in April 2023. Both the MCEM space and the businesses in the region were flooded, causing extensive damage and loss of equipment. Taking advantage of its long-standing contact with the city of São Paulo, the collective scheduled a public hearing with the regional deputy mayor, held at the occupied space. The meeting was not only advertised on social media, inviting residents to a public debate in person with a representative of the city administration, but also broadcast on social media with the possibility of submitting questions.

The use of digital networks and tools also characterises the meetings of the *Slam Fluxo* slam, which we will discuss in greater depth in this text. The slams organised by the collective take place in the cultural movement's space as well as in libraries and other cultural venues in East São Paulo—such as the meeting¹⁰ that took place in December 2021, at the Paulo Setúbal Library. The online broadcast, to a large extent, presents itself as a media alternative, as the host Kenyt interacts with the comments received via social media, reading the messages sent to his phone during his interventions amidst the poets' rounds. The young people who take turns at the microphone sometimes read their texts on their phones, whose language is permeated by local issues (particular to the peripheries) and by more globalised elements that are also in dispute, such as gender and LGBTQIAP+ issues, the environment, etc. It is a web of significations that raises some questions: would the current media moment have any resonance in the way the texts are written? And would there be any differentiation produced by the collective in the media environment? These are questions that we will also pursue.

MCEM's poetry slams: semiosis, activism, and media

A cartography of MCEM should be considered both in the physical space of the cultural movement and in the virtual space—one of media languages and digital networks. In these spaces, there is also a singularity in MCEM's communication processes, which differ from the dominant modes of “being online”, idealised by Silicon Valley—the *locus* for all kinds of advertising, strategically offered by influencers and algorithms. The cultural mediations that stem from MCEM also produce a process of signification in the virtual space that is based on the heterogeneity of the collective—and, above all, on the local cultural dynamics, which inscribe a web of affections that are specific to it: experiences in the neighbourhood, memories, partnerships, social inequalities, etc.

After one of the *Slam Fluxo* slams, held at the Paulo Setúbal Library, which brought together women poets, artist Natália Santos published the following post on her Instagram profile:

“@movimentocultural is also my school. In March, I was trying to be a slam master at Slam Fluxo, what a mission! I have the utmost respect for those who came before me. Ocupa gives me wings to fly in my daily life, allowing me to curate literature/be present in the literary movement of

⁹ Buraco Quente and Santa Inês are the poorest regions in the surrounding area, and also those that participate most in MCEM activities.

¹⁰ Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTqTh5WIDAY&t=897s>>. Accessed Aug 7, 2023.

the hood where I live and also travel around the city, it keeps me close to myself! Plus, lol, this #tbt thing really helps people who, like me, can't keep up with this beast that's always asking for attention. I'd like to see if Instagram could handle following me on the streets! lol"

Her post demonstrates the social-media resonance of a subjectivity positioned in activism for culture in the peripheries. The artist celebrates the lessons learned in the Ermelino collective, going as far as to mention the women who came before her in the movement. In semiotic terms, her post differs from the marketing- and consumption-based meanings—originating from the culture of “entrepreneurship” and digital “influencers”, which characterise most of social media. Natália produces a differentiation when expressing herself on Instagram because the meanings of her post indicate a peripheral mode of enunciation and, if the artist uses the hashtag #tbt, it is to subvert its use by formulating a critique of the need to feed the network frequently in her post.

Slam Fluxo events take place weekly at the MCEM's physical space—in a sort of garage, which has a stage with lighting, seating for the audience, and extensive sound equipment. To participate, artists must register in advance; there are three or four at each event. Led by MC Kenyt, a long-time MCEM member, the events also feature a musical performance—with priority given to artists from different peripheries in the city. After a round of poems, the guest artist or group performs two or three songs. The broadcast on social media allows the audience who are not at the physical space to participate by, for example, voting for their favourite artist. Regarding voting, it is less of a “competition” and more of an incentive for the audience to participate, who are invited to pay attention to the poems shared in the event.

In these slams, the audience is mostly made up of young artists from East São Paulo, who bring along specific ways of experiencing the city—notably the peripheries, the “hood” (“*quebrada*”). In addition to this enunciative position there is an adherence to digital culture that is characteristic of contemporaneity. However, as we saw in Natália's post, the act of being online is not codified by the dominant flows of social networks—for example: dealing with topics driven by algorithms; posting about food, going to the gym, or online games and animated polls, mentions of news involving online celebrities, etc.—, but by cultural codes¹¹ that relate to being a young-artist-from-the-periphery in Ermelino Matarazzo. This is a negotiated media adherence, in Stuart Hall's terms (2003), since the affirmation of local markers will mobilise other meanings. The mediatisation of MCEM's cultural practices is therefore positioned amidst a semiotics that sometimes focuses on Ermelino and sometimes is permeated by globalised media elements of communication. In this regard, it is clear that the cultural movement is also concerned with acting as an outlet, as seen on the collective's YouTube page¹², entitled *Ocupa TV*. Below, we will briefly analyse some editions of the *Slam Fluxo* slams.

Slam poetry¹³: the sung word of new political sensibilities

In the context of our reflection on the aesthetics of collectives, the bodies and voices of poets—whether they are street dancers, bards, rappers, or slammers—take centre stage of the aesthetic-political cartography herein outlined. In them, we can determine the breadth of the insurgent political sensibilities of activism in the city's peripheries. First, due to the connection with traditions of oral culture, especially with regard to competition, which resonates in the voices and bodies of the sung word of Brazilian hip-hop artists and rappers. Secondly, due to the insertion of the processes of rupture into the contemporary world that mark the turn of the millennium, from the 20th century to the 21st century in the Westernised civilisation in which we live.

The rupture that interests us is discursive; that in which an aesthetic construction, historically understood as popular culture and therefore distinct from high culture, occurs. A rupture driven by the dissemination of mass media. Although in the decades following the post-war period, the media were concentrated under the control of large media corporations, broadcasting was decentralised, expanding the possibilities and the reach of messages naturally in the products of the entertainment and culture industry. Considering this context as part of the aesthetic-political cartography of our study means situating the current relevance of the poetry that we want to comprehend. The poets to whom we refer are children of the digital technology forged by the media and later expanded into digital social networks that are the main mediators of the orality whereby the discursive practice of poetic creation led to slam poetry—itself an expression that is far from being just a reference to the geopolitics of the English language,

11 Cultural codes characterise and differentiate semiotic systems (Machado, 2003, p. 35). For example, a musical rhythm used in a certain religious context or the gestures that give meaning to certain situations for a community or a group.

12 Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@ocupa_tv>. Accessed Dec 7, 2023.

13 The history of the emergence of slams, compositional features, and, above all, the pioneering work of collectives in São Paulo can be found in studies by Roberta Estrela D'Alva (2019) and Cyntia A. B. Neves (2017).

also driven by the post-war period.

In fact, the spoken-word poetry practiced by slammers is the expansion of the forms created by US black culture, which found a channel of transmission in political movements that quickly spread throughout the American continent. The reason for its proliferation is only one: the transatlantic black wave that amplified the struggle for the recognition of universal humanitarian civil rights for Afrodiasporic peoples. A struggle that occurred in each country on the continent in a different way but gained traction all over following Haiti's independence, beginning in the late 18th century.

In addition to this fundamental historical memory that carries the discursive tone of struggle that now focuses on the crucial issues of this inequality that has only reinforced racism, it is important to highlight how this discursive tone is translated into slam poetry, bringing young people from different peripheries in the city into a community with its own characteristics. Even without the acrobatics of urban dances, slam poetry recodes in discourse what we see in the disruptive and aggressive breaks of hip-hop movements. It is in the name of this aggressiveness and rupture that words are chosen and arranged in sentences whose rhythm does not follow an articulated melody but, rather, the intonation of a speech that seems “off key, without melody”¹⁴, which motivates the breaks in both speech and writing of the verses. There are two reasons for this aggressiveness: either due to the content of the protest, which is always directed at some representation of power, or due to the nature of the event in which the slam is performed, that is, the public competitions that take place in urban spaces or on stages.

MCEM incorporated slam into its practices, which to this day mobilises young people for the poetic-creative challenge of their experiential insurrections in their poetry slams. In addition to all the challenges in inviting residents to collective community events, slams have become important community spaces of belonging—as previously reported—and, mainly, of standing up to common hardships. Many young people, when meeting the challenge of writing poetry, discover that they are capable of enjoying the use of language as individuals and creators, expanding not only their repertoire, but also their discursive abilities for social interactions. Not to mention learning from their own peers.

From the moment young people become integrated into their communities, performances in the city centre cease to be the only space for expression. It is no longer a matter of making their presence felt in places that seemed hostile to them, but of spreading their work to all places where people are willing to listen. It is not without good reason that MCEM's slams are recorded and can be watched on YouTube. In the performances to which we had access, we were able to observe not only the creative talent of the participants, but also the articulations of the urban cartography of the collectives in the region, which became the object of study of this ongoing research, focused on networks with intertwining artistic forms and cultural texts that flow through space and time. Young people are the main agents of these cartographic articulations of culture, even if they cannot yet grasp the reach of everything that they do.

The slam-poetry competitions themselves have already become established in collectives as a manifestation of activist art in São Paulo. In these poetry performances, the vigour of the competition is preserved in the compositional and interpretative performance of the moment in which the voice echoes in space, striking the air with words. These are spoken or sung poems, recorded with resources that digital technology offers and that young people without sponsorship or large studios to support them explore without being intimidated by amateur production. It is this aesthetic experience that not only awakens in young people the creative energy for the performance of their poems, but also awakens in them an awareness of political sensitivity.

This is what we were able to verify at the Slam Fluxo Slam, conceived of and carried out by MCEM, with support from the funding programme *Fomento à Cultura da Periferia*.

14 Line from the Caetano Veloso's 1968 song *É proibido proibir*, in reference to the May 1968 aphorism “*Il est interdit d'interdire*”, meaning “it is forbidden to forbid”.

Figure 1: Slam poet Clamant and host and poet Kenyt at the Slam Fluxo slam in Ermelino Matarazzo, São Paulo.

Source: Screenshot from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUcfH49ACPQ>.

Led by MC Kenyt, who, besides introducing the contestants, also sings the opening: “*Quem tá na correria tá no? Fluxo!*”¹⁵—with a marked intonation of the syllable “*flu*” in “*fluxo*” and a lengthening in the pronunciation of “*xo*” (/kso/).

Although the themes addressed are inspired by the violent reality of the neighbourhoods affecting young people, the strength of their creativity comes from translating experiences into compositions intoned with very well-defined rhythms and rhymes. The intonational mode of composing, of discovering the melody of articulated speech in the flow of timbres and intensities of reciting is what determines where to place emphasis and concentrate poetry’s creative and expressive energy. Rhythm and rhyme are responsible for distributing the semantic-poetic dimension, even if this requires breaking the syntactic order and opening paths for the insertion of other ways of speaking mixed with all the accents that make up Brazil.

The enunciation of verses indicates a diversity of references that relate to a reality that is critically (re) constructed in artistic language. Speaking at the microphone is to be the protagonist of experiences, reorganising them in search of other possible realities. The poems express a peripheral multiplicity woven by activism, social criticism, art, and belonging to the neighbourhood, whose reality therein addressed outlines the conditions for change in the peripheries—akin to heterogeneous and decentralised phenomena, which, for Deleuze and Guattari (2000), indicate other existential modalities.

That way, cartography identifies the emergence of situated knowledge, based on MCEM’s cultural dynamics, whose codes are mobilised in various activities that take place in the collective space—such as the slams. For Lotman (1990), the dynamics of generating meaning in languages mobilises not only a message to be transmitted, but a *message about the language itself* (metalanguage), which allows us, in the case of MCEM’s media productions, to think critically about digital-media culture, since it is positioned on new ethical-political bases in the ways in which the collective appropriates these tools. From this perspective, culture is conceived of as a processual phenomenon—hence the choice of the cartographic method: following processes and tracing new communicational and existential landscapes (Kastrup; Passos, 2013). These slams thus confront inequalities in a transversal and collective way, by activating sensitivities and affections that suggest *possible solutions* to peripheral problems (thinking critically about the periphery, encouraging people to participate in the meetings and, who knows, *become poets* too). The articulation of certain issues leads to organisational tactics and strategies, which depend on the questions posed to create *ways of acting within and without the networks*. The Slam Fluxo poetry slams therefore configure one of the fronts on which it is possible to observe the cultural mediations that constitute MCEM, which involve concerns about improving life conditions in the peripheries and issues of diversity and inclusion.

Final remarks

This brief analysis on the semiotic functioning of the poetry slams organised by the Ermelino Matarazzo Cultural Movement (MCEM) is a cartographic fragment of an ongoing research project. Based on the empirical data collected, we have observed that these slams are a space for sharing feelings that suggest resistance and activism in

15 “*Estar na correria*” (literally “to be in the rush”) is a colloquial expression in Brazilian peripheries that conveys a sense of being constantly busy, hustling, or striving to make a living, often in informal or precarious conditions. “*Fluxo*” (literally “flow”) refers to both the dynamic movement of people and activities in these spaces and, more specifically, to street gatherings where Brazilian funk is played, serving as a cultural and social hub in these communities.

search of a better life in the city's peripheries. The meanings mobilised in the verses are permeated by local mediations and by engagements characterised by contemporary disputes in the temporality of digital networks—that is why we understand MCEM based on Lotman's (1996) conception, which understands culture as a heterogeneous structure, with codes that are unique to it, but permeable to new meanings. This is how the collective works, with a certain local memory of pro-culture activism and taking on other contemporary struggles. By choosing the cartographic method, we trace some significations that constitute MCEM as a space of transversalities, which indicates a decentralised phenomenon that produces differences (Deleuze; Guattari, 2000).

The continuation of this research will add more data to the analysis of the slams; data produced in participatory research, complementing the comprehension of the semiotic territory of the collective—in its physical space and media resonance. Subsequently, the cartography of MCEM will be developed in tandem with cartographies of other regions. The goal is to create a map of the social impacts of various local types of activism and their media expressions. This will help us to develop a theoretical framework for an alternative, plural, and inclusive communicational and media environment that can be further explored in academic research.

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